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CURRENT COMMENT.

A BELATED echo of the poor old Washington conference has reached us—two of them, in fact. Mr. Elihu Root the other day told the enraptured Republicans of New York State that this conference had produced a series of treaties and resolutions "which dispelled the cloud of war, re-established mutual confidence and kindly feeling . . . relieved the tax-burdened world of great burdens, and added another substantial contribution by America to the peace of the world. This was done entirely by the exercise of moral forces. . . . The sword was thrown away with the scabbard by America's startling initial proposal to scrap her \$300 million worth of new naval vessels." We vow to God, as stout old Matt Bramble declared, that when we read such infernal lying, hoodwinking claptrap as this, we hardly know whether to laugh or to swear. The fact is that the net result of the Washington conference is precisely nothing. The cloud of war is not dispelled, the tax-burdened world is not relieved of a straw's weight of its load, and if anyone can notice any re-establishment of mutual confidence and kindly feeling among the nations of the world, we should be pleased to hear of it. Moreover, we say again as we have said many times before, that the conference was nothing but a smoke-screen. We say and maintain, not only that the conference produced none of the results catalogued by Mr. Root—that is obvious to anyone who reads the newspapers—but that it was never meant to produce them. It was a measure of treacherous apparent concession to a popular longing for peace, stability and freedom, and its purpose was to perpetuate in power the persons and forces that vamped it up; and as such, it was a success.

Now, specifically, as regards America's "startling initial proposal to scrap her \$300 million worth of new naval vessels," we call attention to the fact that this naval treaty, over which the press went into ecstasies like a tom-cat over a root of valerian, and which our liberal friends slathered with copious irrigations of sop—this treaty has not been ratified either by France or Italy and is therefore inoperative. Moreover, Great Britain and Japan are reported to be honouring it only in the breach—"acceptance in principle," in other words. Therefore Secretary Denby has announced that our own observance of its provisions will be postponed. Just so. Now we ask our readers candidly, what can one say about such arrant humbug as this? Taking into account the kind of men who got that treaty up, considering their character, their

obvious motives and desires, their undeviating record in the past, can anyone really believe that the treaty was ever intended to be kept to *bona fide*, or to be thought of for a moment after its immediate purpose had been fulfilled? Avast with such nonsense.

BUT what disgusts us to the point of saturation is the tone of injured innocence and outraged confidence adopted by some of our "progressive" newspapers towards this peculiarly mean and callous swindle. The New York *World*, for instance, tries hard to make one believe that its editors were born yesterday. Last week, in comment on the statement of Secretary Denby and some pungent remarks on the subject made in the Senate by Mr. Borah, the *World* got up a fine appearance of dark and terrible indignation that nothing as yet had come of the naval treaty and that to all appearances it is going by the board. It is well enough for our liberal and uplifting contemporaries to talk like this; they touted the treaty with transparent sincerity, with the perennial experience-proof optimism of invincible ignorance. But the New York *World* is not edited by persons of that type; its editors have given abundant evidence to the contrary; and for the *World* and other papers of its ilk to indulge in these pretensions, is inappropriate and unconvincing. They are doing the stunt of victimized virtue rather too muchly, as the late A. Ward would say.

THE political powder-mine in the Near East seems at this writing on the verge of a grand blow-up, the eventual consequences of which it would be difficult to estimate. Kemal Pasha has obviously not been greatly impressed with the Allied proposals that he stay his victorious hosts until the calling of a peace-conference at which, according to the verbal assurances of M. Poincaré, Mr. Lloyd George and their associated politicians, Eastern Thrace and Constantinople will be returned to Turkish rule, though the wedge of water that divides the Turkish lands will be held under alien control. Probably Kemal recalls that the Germans signed an armistice not so many years ago with virtually these same politicians, on the basis of a peace-programme of no annexations, no punitive indemnities and the self-determination of peoples, but when the diplomats gathered about the peace-table they conveniently forgot all about these stipulations. The Turkish Nationalist leader would not have to be an oversophisticated person to put little faith in the pledges of the Christian gentlemen with whom he has to deal in this matter.

EVEN if Kemal were uncommonly simple-minded and credulous, the recent actions of the British Government must have given him ground for distrust. Mr. Lloyd George's idea of an armistice seems to be that the Turks must cease all military activities, while the British Government masses a huge volume of armament about the Dardanelles, to hold Kemal at bay, and the Greeks are permitted to gather together the remnants of their scattered forces and fortify strategic places in the Thracian terrain. To the Turks this arrangement may well appear somewhat one-sided. Moreover, Kemal's doubts about the future have assuredly not been allayed by the political overturn in Greece, with the prospect that Mr. Lloyd George's old crony and fellow-highjack, M. Venizelos, will presently resume control of Greek affairs. With this engaging pair lined up against him, Kemal will not be long in discovering that a military triumph is one thing, but reaping the legitimate fruits of victory is something else again.

ENGLAND and France, through the Turks and Greeks, have been waging war for some time, and the present situation at the Straits makes one wonder how long it will be before they drop proxy warfare and go at one another's throat in earnest. One also wonders where this blundering old country of ours will stand when they do. Things are not as right for our participation as they were in 1917, and even that war took a lot of selling. The technique of selling a war to our people is pretty well developed, but our last investment will make us for some time cautious buyers. Besides, the sales-force at Washington is not as strong as it was in Mr. Wilson's day. Mr. Hughes's frost-bitten oratory will not much move our youth to fight and die, and as a friend said to us the other day, "I can't imagine the pool of idealism being deeply stirred by Warren G." Probably the spell of moralistic platitude is broken for a generation at least. Its sway was great while it lasted; Mr. Wilson was certainly the man of the hour. But how humorous it will be to have one of our erstwhile noble allies bidding for our active support against another!

AMERICAN Free-States should be interested to note that as soon as Mr. Hughes returned from his South American junket Sir Auckland Geddes hastened over from the British embassy to instruct him on what's what in the Near East, whereupon Mr. Hughes promptly issued an announcement unequivocally backing the proposals of the British Government for the freedom of the Dardanelles and the protection of religious and racial minorities. This commitment would be somewhat easier to understand if Mr. Hughes had explained concisely what he meant by the freedom of the Dardanelles; for we recall that Mr. Wilson used to talk with considerable emphasis about fighting for the "freedom of the seas," but in the last analysis it developed that the phrase had precisely no significance whatever. Surely Mr. Hughes is hardly so naïve as to believe that if the Straits are transferred to the control of Great Britain or any other Power, either directly or under the dummy directorate of the League of Nations, they will be "free" in time of war; and in time of peace they have always been free anyway. As for the racial and religious minorities in Thrace under Turkish rule, they would set up howls of despair if they were reduced to the sub-human status of the racial minority in our own Southern States. If Mr. Hughes wishes to test the comparative liberality of the Turks in such matters, let him try the experiment of appointing one of our recent Jewish ambassadors to Turkey, Mr. Oscar Straus, Mr. Morgenthau or Mr. Elkus, as our chief diplomatic representative in one of the new Allied-made nations, such as Poland, Finland or Hungary.

ANOTHER peace-conference went up in smoke recently when the Imperial Japanese Government called its delegation home from Chang-Chau, Manchuria, and ended for the present its negotiations with representatives of the Russian Government and representatives of the Far Eastern Republic for Japanese withdrawal from Eastern Siberia. From the outset of the proceedings the Japanese Government acted according to form. It tried to bar the Russian delegates from the conference, in order to deal only with the little Chita Government, which, facing its formidable antagonist alone, might be bulldozed into generous concessions. It stipulated for special privileges for Japanese nationals in the control of valuable natural resources in the territory to be evacuated. Backed by the Russians, the Siberian representatives showed no inclination to make such concessions. The final split came over the matter of the evacuation of the northern half of the island of Sakhalin, a territory of great potential wealth which the Japanese refuse to give up until they have been compensated for the so-called Nikolaievsk massacre.

IN and about Nikolaievsk the Japanese invaders had perpetrated the usual number of rapacities and outrages against the inhabitants. The situation became so intolerable that the inhabitants eventually were moved to rise and attack the usurping foreigners. In the fighting which

ensued some 700 Japanese were killed, and the total of native victims in the vicinity ran to several thousands. If a burglar in the course of his profession suffered injury or death at the hands of a group of outraged householders, his family would assuredly have little ethical or legal grounds for demanding compensation. Among burglarious imperialist Governments, however, the practice of demanding indemnities in such cases is not uncommon, and the Japanese Government is making a great show of moral indignation over the refusal of the Russians and Siberians to grant their demand for a thumping big payment for the loss of Japanese cannon-fodder. Apparently the Japanese Government holds that a cession of Sakhalin for a sufficient length of time to enable them to strip it of its wealth in timber and minerals is a suitable *quid pro quo*. Pending a new conference they will hold the island, but since the occupation of Vladivostok and the mainland has become increasingly difficult in the face of a hostile population, they will apparently carry out their plans of evacuation.

THE French Government is starting in again to borrow from Jacques to pay Jean, and is thereby getting itself out of a tight place and into a tighter one. The official system of doing business forms as neat a circle as anyone ever saw. The need for a new loan is created by the current deficit, which runs this year to something like four billion francs; and the chief burden upon the treasury is, of course, the military establishment. The security for the new loan is, in the last analysis, Germany's promise to pay; and the chief dependence of the bondholders is, therefore, the military establishment. As the internal debt increases, the pressure for the collection of reparations increases, the need for an army increases, and as anyone can see, the cost of maintaining the army necessitates the issuance of a new loan. The sequence does not move exactly in a circle, but rather in a spiral, and as the tower rises higher and higher, we continue to wonder whether the Government will climb down or fall down, and if so, when and how.

ACCORDING to a statement issued recently by the Public Education Association, the number of part-time pupils in the schools of New York City has increased five-fold in the last four years, and now reaches a total of 166,000. If the economic condition of the parents of the part-time pupils were such that they could put their children into private institutions, the inadequacy of the public-school system would not be a very serious matter. The well-to-do parents of New York City have already done this to an extent that would be astonishing to anyone who was familiar only with conditions in the Western States. As a result, the educational system as a whole shows a definite economic stratification, the public schools have suffered seriously from the neglect and disregard of a large and influential class, and the families that can not shift for themselves have seen the opportunities for the education of their children gradually contract with the increase in population. If the increment in rents which results from this same increase in population were turned to the service of instruction, there would be schools enough and to spare; but this means of enabling "the masses" to finance their own education is not likely to appeal to the gentlemen who now hold the rent-rolls.

IN the current issue of the *Messenger* there is a neat commentary on the proposal of the Negro "Zionists" that the black population of this country shall betake itself to Africa, and there work out the destiny of the Negro "nation." "It is not so easy to leave these U. S.," says the *Messenger*. "The white people have not deported any considerable number of Negroes to Africa—but they have seized hundreds of thousands by force and brought them from Africa to the United States! The work of getting a goodly supply of black labour here is not going to be undone overnight." The editor then calls attention to the fact that a labour-agent was recently fined four thousand dollars for attempting to move a few black "hands" from Alabama to the North. The Southern black labourers

may want to go, and the Southern white labourers may wish that they would go, but the Southern landlords and the Southern employers will see to it that the Negroes stay "where they belong." If the black and the white workers together were strong enough to clear the way for Negro emigration, they would be strong enough to establish in this country a condition of economic freedom which would make emigration undesirable, from the point of view of the Negroes themselves.

ACCORDING to Dr. James Whitney Hall, chairman of the Medical Commission on Insanity for Cook County, Illinois, insanity has increased in Chicago more than 100 per cent since the Volstead Act went into effect. Dr. Hall attributes this increase to the kind of liquor that is being consumed under the blessings of prohibition. "Whereas the victim of alcoholic liquor in the pre-Volstead days," says Dr. Hall, "became shiftless, unable or unwilling to care for his wife and family, unkempt, in fact a bum, the present-day victim becomes a far more terrible spectacle. He becomes a maniac, a train-wrecker, house-breaker. . . . In many cases he dies of the effects. In some cases he becomes blind or insane, and he can not be cured."

ALL this brings back to our mind a conversation which we had some days ago with a friend who has lately returned from Russia. In that country, he told us, the attempts to enforce prohibition resulted just as they have resulted here: in the general, surreptitious manufacture of much vile hooch, which used up badly needed food-supplies and produced decidedly deleterious effects upon its users. Therefore the Soviet Government, with that uncommon sense which seems to be peculiar to it alone among the Governments of the world, reasoned as follows: "Prohibition is a failure; for want of funds, popular education is also a failure; let us allow the sale of vodka, making it a Government monopoly. Then we will sell the people good vodka and use the proceeds towards building up our educational system. In the schools we will teach the people that vodka is harmful and at the same time we will encourage the use of light alcoholic drinks." This sounds like the beginning of a very sensible solution of the liquor-problem. In view of the complete break-down, in this country, of both prohibition-enforcement and popular education, we are wondering whether some such arrangement as this might not be very profitably undertaken here, if we only had the wisdom to do it.

ACCORDING to an opulent-looking circular which appears to be distributed widely through our mails, the International Association for the Advancement of Religious and Political Liberty, Inc., invites Americans to purchase \$1,500,000 in stock, divided into ten-dollar shares, the proceeds to be devoted to the overthrow of the Mexican Government and the substitution of a new regime under General Felix Diaz, nephew of the late Uncle Porfirio of fragrant memory. If this society for the advancement of revolution may be taken as an authority, the present Mexican Government is composed wholly of Bolsheviks and pro-Germans; in fact we learn from this circular that Bolshevism had spread to Mexico as far back as 1913, or several years before it became prevalent in Russia. In addition to the privilege of assisting in the re-establishment of "a legitimate and stable Government" across the Rio Grande, investors are offered alluring financial returns, for we are assured that as soon as the legitimate Government comes in "Mexicans of standing and great influence" will urge it to redeem the shares at \$115 the hundred, with eight per cent cumulative interest. According to the optimistic Association, the venture is 99.9 per cent likely to succeed. Apparently our post-office authorities consider it a legitimate neighbourly attention to transmit this appeal; but it is not difficult to imagine the awful fulminations of Mr. Hughes if the Mexican Government similarly aided and abetted and circulated the literature of a corporation that was attempting to raise a great sum of money for the avowed purpose of overthrowing by force and violence the Government of the United States.

WHEN we read such gems of wisdom from the Republican and Democratic Campaign-Books as were quoted in our morning papers, we were forcibly reminded of the standardized political platform recently proposed in Whiting's Column, in the Boston *Herald*. The *Herald*, as the friend who sent us the clipping remarked, is staunchly Republican and unwaveringly reactionary—but one might suspect that it is also somewhat disillusioned concerning the nature and usefulness of political parties. Among the planks of this patent, reversible platform "which shall be durable, bomb-proof and suitable for all occasions and all candidates," is this: "We approve with unrestrained enthusiasm the record in office and the moral character out of office of every candidate of our party. We commend their unimpeachable integrity and their flawless wisdom of decision. . . . We condemn the policies and performances of the candidates of the other party. They have demonstrated incompetence, and to give the Government into their hands is just like sowing dandelions in the front lawn." This sums up admirably what is to be found in the Republican and Democratic Campaign-Books and has the advantage of saving a good many thousand words and much paper. We therefore recommend it to the national committees of both parties for their careful consideration.

WE are deeply interested in the news that the German Government has sent Count von Brockdorf-Rantzau as Ambassador to Moscow. He has long seemed to us the most considerable man that Germany had in her public service, whether under the new or old regime; and we infer from the dispatch of a man of such conspicuous ability to this particularly important post, that the official relations between Moscow and Berlin will henceforth bear closer watching. Von Brockdorf-Rantzau, it will be remembered, declined to sign the treaty of Versailles, thereby proving himself, in the face of great difficulties, a man of sterling integrity as well as foresight. We will wager that since that day the Germans have ruefully wished that they had had the gizzard to stand by him and keep their skirts clean, come what might, of the ineradicable stain of that infamy. Especially must they wish that they had done so when they contemplate the position of the Turk. The Allies treated the Turk like an outlaw too, but not for long; and look at the Turk now!

SPEAKING of the Turk, we observe with confusion and perplexity that he is the real thing in prohibition-enforcement. When Kemal Pasha takes any territory, the first thing he does is to vote it dry by a majority of one, *nem. con.*, and the kind of prohibition that he enforces is the kind that really prohibits, apparently, for he ties offenders up to the whipping-post and properly whales them. This puts us in a quandary. We have been reading reports from the missionaries, the resolutions of religious bodies, and all that sort of thing, and what with atrocities and all, we had about decided that we would have to come out strong on the side of the Greeks and Christians; but then comes along the Turk in his attractive impersonation of the high moral uplift, and so we be durned if we know what to do. If we come out for the Turk, we have to stand for the atrocities, rugs, cigarettes, and so forth; but if we come out for the Greeks and Christians, we are lending the light of our benevolence to hooch, and by implication giving the moral element in our own civilization a black eye. So there we are!

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It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

THE FREEDOM OF THE SEIZE.

THE Administration's decision to restrain the activities of the egregious "prohibition navy" within the three-mile limit, is a wise one. Every nation has the right in its collective capacity, we conceive, to make a fool of itself in whatever way it pleases and to whatever extent, as long as in so doing it does not encroach upon the rights and prerogatives of other nations. Any Administration has the full and free right to experiment with any sort of legislative jackassery that the people will tolerate, provided it does so within the confines of its own bailiwick. This nation now has prohibition, to do with as it likes. As a vicious evil done in the tenuous hope that good may come; as a political issue; as a source of incredible graft; as a potent instrument for debauching public morals; prohibition is ours. As a means of posing the nation in a most grotesque and repulsive attitude before the world, it has given us Izzy Einstein, the prohibition navy, and our one and only official bootlegger, Mr. Lasker, about whom, we observe with interest, the moral and religious element in the country is for some reason keeping mighty quiet.

All this is right and proper. If the American people like that sort of thing, then that is just the sort of thing they like, and they should have it. We can not congratulate them on their taste, but neither can we quarrel with them about it. We are all for individual communities, as for individual persons, doing just what they please, clear to the left-field fence of their own domain. When in their zeal, however, they try to crowd their neighbours with their little peculiarities, we hugely enjoy seeing them sent to the right-about. On this account we had a thrill of delight the other day when the captain of a British sloop, outside the three-mile limit, turned his searchlight on the British flag and stood off our prohibition navy with a resolute and earnest promise to kill the first man who climbed the side of his ship.

If we had been in Lord Curzon's place at the head of the British Foreign Office, at the very first seizure and search of a British vessel outside the three-mile limit we should have proceeded as follows: we would send a ship-load of liquor across the Atlantic in convoy of the biggest iron-clad in the British navy, bring both vessels to anchor just one cable's-length outside the three-mile limit, and then notify Mr. Hughes that if he had anything to say about it, we should listen attentively and admire to be present. Just so during the early days of the war, if we had been at the head of foreign affairs for this country, the British navy would have stopped our ships and rifled the United States mail just once—once only, and never again without the liveliest kind of fight. The next mail that left these shores would have left in convoy of the entire Atlantic fleet, and piled on the deck of the flagship so as to be in plain sight; and word would have gone along with it in the kind of diplomatic language that Chicherin uses when he really warms up to a subject, that anyone who molested that mail would be guaranteed his full money's worth of entertainment. Anyone with a milligram of manhood in him, it strikes us, would do these things; anyone who would not at the first breath of temptation sell out his country's dignity and his own for a copper cent, and throw in his soul's salvation for good measure. There are many men in England's history whom we admire more than we do Palmerston; but we should like to see a prohibition navy stop an English ship on the high seas, with a Palmerston in the Foreign

Office. Andrew Jackson and Grover Cleveland had their faults, but there were just a few things that they would not do; and our British brethren can bless their lucky stars that they had but a pliable egomaniac to deal with in the American Presidency in 1914, and not Jackson or Cleveland.

Even at home, the enforcement of prohibition is rapidly taking rank among the extra-hazardous occupations. The statement is now made officially that several hundred enforcement-officers have been killed, and something over a thousand wounded. This is quite what one would expect, and except as a matter of sentiment, one's regret can be hardly more than formal. The processes of enforcement are necessarily provocative of violence, and equally so whether the suspected person be innocent or guilty; rather more so, perhaps, if he be innocent. These processes are a humiliating and outrageous violation of natural justice, an exasperating infringement upon one's self-respect. As such, one wonders only that they meet with a violent expression of resentment as infrequently as they do. Those who undertake to administer these processes do so in full knowledge of their infamous character; and if they are killed or maimed in the undertaking, one can but think that they get their deserts. One is confirmed in this opinion, too, through conviction that so many are led by corrupt motives to become enforcement-officers. The opportunities for gain through collusion with the contraband trade are so great and so easy that they offer every attraction to the kind of person who is worth far more to the world dead than alive. People at large are becoming increasingly aware of this, and are in consequence increasingly disposed to assume that there is an open season on enforcement-officers the year round. All of which goes to show that prohibition does not quite reach the heart of the liquor-problem, and that the very worst effects of legislative stupidity are usually indirect and collateral.

THE FOUNDING STEPFATHERS.

OUR excellent contemporary, the *Christian Science Monitor*, recently published some articles giving a list of six countries to the south of us over which the United States Government has established a greater or less degree of financial hegemony. The supervision ranges from control of the customs to actual dictatorship. The countries are Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Bolivia, and though their total population is somewhat less than eleven million, their area is nearly fourteen million square miles, or almost half the area of the continental United States, and their potential wealth in minerals, forests and oil is almost beyond computation. It is worth noting that arrangements have recently been made or are in the making for these various countries to negotiate loans from American bankers, at the appropriately large interest that obtains in such transactions, aggregating some \$135 million. Before the war the total foreign debt of these countries came to less than \$120 million. If we add to these figures the enormous value of the pickings snapped up by our concessionaires with the aid of our imperialist officials, and the profits they derive from peon-labour on a wage-basis of twenty cents a day or thereabouts, with the pressure of American bayonets to keep the workers at their tasks, it can be seen that this policy of southerly expansion and penetration is immediately highly profitable to a limited but apparently most influential element of our citizenship.

The imperialist process began back in the days of

President Roosevelt's neat little revolution in Panama, by which that Republic conveniently severed itself from Colombia and became a satellite of the American Government. Before the late war, Panama had a national debt of some \$5000. Reorganization of its finances under an American fiscal commission was completed last year, at which time the debt of the little Republic was shown to have increased to the sturdy figure of seven million dollars, most of it held in the United States. The 400,000 inhabitants have further troubles in prospect, for arrangements are now being made for a new American loan of \$10 million.

It was under President Taft that some of our banking-interests kindly took over Nicaragua, after the revolution of 1909, which was organized and financed in the United States. The revolutionists drove out the President of the country, but the Nicaraguan Congress elected another who was equally unsatisfactory to the American intriguers. The new President was beating the revolutionists all along the line, when Secretary Knox took advantage of the fact that two American adventurers, part of an insurgent band, had been killed in the fighting, to send in some 2350 marines to put over the revolution and see that a candidate agreeable to American interests was declared president. When the Congress refused to ratify the dummy, it was dissolved with the aid of our brave lads, and Nicaraguan independence passed into history. The ensuing treaty gave us the right to build a canal across the country at any time we should be moved to do so, and granted the United States valuable leasehold-concessions on either coast. Before we began our altruistic endeavours, Nicaragua had a national debt of \$2,500,000. By the time we had established law and order, the country was mortgaged to our bankers for some \$15 million, and those same bankers were in control of its railways and were collecting the customs and administering the public finances. These financial founding stepfathers are now, on behalf of the people of Nicaragua, negotiating a new loan of three million dollars from themselves. Curiously enough, the Nicaraguans have all along exhibited the most callous lack of appreciation for these various and sundry favours conferred by their Uncle Samuel.

Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Taft made tentative beginnings in our southerly imperialism. It was not until the pious Mr. Wilson came in and events on another continent engrossed public attention that the American Government really got into its stride in this matter. It was under those staunch pacifists and anti-imperialists, Mr. William J. Bryan and Mr. Josephus Daniels, the one transmitting the orders and the other furnishing the marines, that the American Government appropriated Haiti and Santo Domingo and began to perfect various other arrangements involving Central and South American real estate. It was possibly through coincidence that whenever Mr. Wilson delivered one of his peculiarly effective excoriations of the imperialist policy of the Kaiser's Government, Mr. Daniels's valiant boys would set about shooting a few hundred more Haitians or the State Department would issue an order for the overthrow of another native Government that stood in the way of making the Caribbean safe for American bankers. Both Haiti and Santo Domingo were seized by force of arms and have been held under military dictatorship. A short time ago, with a considerable flourish of trumpets, Mr. Hughes announced that we were prepared to withdraw our forces from Santo Domingo as soon as the Government functioning there under our guns complied with

certain conditions. These included the ratification of all acts of the military regime of the United States, the validation of the so-called final loan sought by our bankers, and an extension of the powers of the American General Receiver of Customs which would legally make that officer the financial dictator of the country. Here again the ungrateful natives have raised a considerable uproar of protest and the whole matter is still in process of solution. A loan of \$6,500,000 was imposed on Santo Domingo last year and the plans for Haiti contemplate a loan of \$40 million, which will give the banking-interests concerned a substantial mortgage on that country.

Under Mr. Hughes the policy of extending our financial hegemony throughout the hemisphere has been further developed, and two great countries, Peru and Bolivia, with a combined area of some 1,250,000 square miles, have come into the American financial solar system. Our bankers are planning to favour Peru with a loan of \$50 million and in preparation for this, a former officer of our State Department has been made administrator of customs in that country, the customs-system has been reorganized, and the programme includes the establishment of a bank of issue under the supervision of our interested bankers and the revision, in the interests of American concessionaires, of the laws relating to oil-lands. Bolivia has already obtained a loan of \$24 million, in return for which American bankers have stepped into the Banca de la Nacion, and a commission of three members, including two Americans, has been appointed to take command of the revenues and the fiscal affairs of the nation.

Paraguay has also selected an American customs-adviser, but though the country has recently suffered from political disturbances, our marines have not yet slipped in to establish law and order and no loans have been effected.

The recent American policy in Cuba has of course been consistent with these other developments of financial imperialism. In conformity with the "recapture" clauses which our Government originally inserted in the Constitution of the Cuban Republic, our General Crowder has been sitting in Havana as a sort of uncrowned dictator of the island for the past twenty months, and under the direction of our State Department, arrangements for a bankers' loan of \$50 million have been worried through the reluctant Cuban Congress. The obvious indisposition of the Cubans to sign up for this sizable mortgage has resulted in some monitory brandishing of the Big Stick by Mr. Hughes, and at present the Cubans seem faced by the unfortunate alternative of accepting the loan, with its attached financial and political conditions, or else having their semi-independent political administration supplanted by one manned directly by American political place-holders of the type which is already making our name so malodorous in the region of the Caribbean.

A variant of this established imperialist policy was revealed recently when the Administration made an effort to plant a new American financial colony in Africa. Here the scheme for which the Administration sought the approval of Congress was for a loan of five million dollars to Liberia, to be made from the United States treasury. It developed in the discussion of this measure that two-thirds of the money was to be devoted to paying off at par the various bonded obligations of the Government of Liberia, a good part of which had been bought up by speculative financiers at twenty cents on the dollar, and the rest was to be dissipated in a

few years by American fiscal administrators, with aggregate salaries of \$100,000 a year, to be appointed to take charge of the annual Liberian revenues of \$160,000. This philanthropic plan to divide five million dollars of our money between the speculators and the politicians on a sixty-forty basis was luckily deferred after Senator Borah had exposed its true significance, and since such appropriations involve debates in Congress which are likely to prove embarrassing, it is to be assumed that hereafter the Wilsonian technique of bankers' loans with the co-operation of the marines will be followed. Such matters can be managed quietly without stirring up inquisitive senators.

In sum, it would appear that with the aid of the political arm our bankers have already gathered in mortgages on a considerable part of South and Central America. The process is apparently not unlike that followed by British imperialists in the case of Egypt, when successive loans under military duress reduced the country in course of time to such a state of fiscal dependence and helplessness that a formal protectorate in the interest of the bondholders became inevitable. In such cases as Haiti and Nicaragua, our financial penetration has virtually assumed the substance of annexation, though all the legal formalities have not been established.

Since this expansionist policy has been pursued with equal zeal under a Taft, a Wilson and a Harding, it is fair to assume that it is now a fixed policy, and according to the laws of financial gravitation it would seem inevitable that in the course of time all the South American republics will become satellites of our banking-interests. The metaphor is perhaps unfortunate, for instead of planetary dependents circling placidly about their worshipful sun, these will be satellites wildly straining at their orbits and hating the centripetal power and the system which holds them in confinement. The situation that has already developed in Haiti, in Nicaragua and elsewhere indicates that the maintenance of our imperialism must involve us in a series of sordid and dirty little wars against peoples unaccustomed to the repressions and exactions of alien domination. When the maladjustments of the masters of the Versailles conference work out to their inevitable conclusion and we find ourselves involved in a new clash with fresh combinations of great Powers for the mastery of the world, we must be prepared to reap what our political and financial founding stepfathers are so assiduously sowing for us through the length and breadth of this hemisphere. Instead of one Ireland, hoping, praying and contriving for our downfall, we shall face a whole continent of Irelands which will see in American dissolution their only hope for freedom.

IN ITS IMAGE.

THE mournful prophets of our mechanical age concentrate, it seems to us, too much upon the heavy burden that the machine lays upon our rebellious instincts. As we come in of a fine morning to our office, we have to pay attention to a half symbolic world, suggested by the cold and not typographically beautiful print of our morning newspaper. True, we do have to pay attention to it; but if it is exceptionally fine weather—say a sunny day after weeks of rain, a sparkling brown forenoon of crisp autumn, or a soft green morning in the early spring—our eyes will wander, willy-nilly to the window. If it happens that something dramatic or humanly exciting is taking

place in the fleeting scene—a man playing with his dog, perhaps, or a pretty young schoolgirl swinging along down the road—we are truants to the day's important news. Sometimes there will be, in the train coming into town, earnest young people, impressed with the necessity of self-development, who will study their French or German conjugations with an almost religious intensity, but they, too, are following a simple instinct, the itch to emulate, and hence are not different at bottom from most of the other passengers.

Look about this railway-carriage, say our modern sociologists, and see where at every point—especially at the hitherto unsuspected points—is revealed to the discerning eye the agony of the age, the conflict of the machine with the native impulses of the natural man. Observe the standardized, machine-made garments of the men. Now it is a notorious fact that the majority of males like nothing better than to strut and show off and dress up in gay colours; but the machine says No; with the population as large as it is nowadays individuality in clothes would be too costly and too time-consuming. Tailors exist to take care of our habiliments, and if we feel a bit done out of æsthetic satisfaction, is there not modern art, expressly designed to help us? So one might run through the list, even of the most trivial things, and find the same law at work; or rather, any sociologist would run through it for one, if one were disposed to give him but half a chance.

Unquestionably there is a certain force in this charge, which, not being privy to all the laws of sociology, we should be the last to deny. Yet somehow it seems rather trivial to us, just as we should regard it as unimportant to point out that a criminal was cross-eyed (even if it were true), when he had just murdered his father. We suspect that the real trouble with the machine lies elsewhere. What it really lacks is a sense of humour.

Enough has already been written on humour to make it almost a humourless subject, but both those who are authorities on the subject and those who would like to be coincide in saying that caprice is one of the major elements in the puzzling compound. It is the unpredictable and the unpredicted which unite to make us laugh. Humour presupposes a pluralistic universe, in which the chance that anything may happen, particularly anything absurd, is ever present. Who ever heard of a grinning determinist? Irony, perhaps, is the amusement we derive from watching the pretensions of man go smash against what we are pleased to recognize as the facts. But is it not a rather tired and passive enjoyment? Humour springs from vitality, from the confidence, whether illusory or not, that a flicker of one eyelash will render empires ridiculous; whereas irony is the rather mean pleasure that we get from believing that all man's noblest efforts are made ineffectual and childish by a simple shift in a chemical formula.

What we resent in the machine is not its power, for that is of its nature, but its evocation of imitative adaptations on the part of men and women. The machine has no vengeance, no remorse, no flexibility—and no gaiety. If it runs twelve hours a day instead of six, it will produce just twice as many nails or patented corsets. If it stops, it will produce nothing, but it is not shocked at this violation of all the best American tenets, for it is shocked at nothing, and feels nothing. What we do know is that no machine worthy of the name, that has been turning out pistons for an automobile, will suddenly begin to turn out

jews'-harps. It can do only what is expected of it, and it can never disappoint any more than it can ever surprise. It is as regular in its habits as modern moralists seem never tired of assuring a credulous humanity that men and women should be. If it breaks down, one may be sure that the fact is due to wholly ascertainable and usually remedial causes.

Now the whole trouble with our modern times is simply that man is prostrate before his own handiwork, the machine. He is trying to make himself more and more like the efficient mechanical engine, instead of attempting, and gloriously failing, to make the mechanical engine more like himself; or at least succeeding in the attempt to put this engine in the unimportant position it merits. It is actually considered something honourable and fine, instead of something to be reflected upon with melancholy, if a man can be relied upon unquestionably and unhesitatingly, if he is always punctual, if he never shocks one. One must, it seems, expect a person to do certain things, as confidently as one expects the morning milk to be on time. The terrible thing is that this seems actually to be taking place. We have reached the point where psychologists do not hesitate to predict just what proportion out of one hundred thousand inhabitants will go mad at the age of thirty-two, and the point where the mathematical degree of gullibility in the sixty-five per cent of our so-called normal population is a matter of everyday routine for advertising-experts and publicity-agents.

Yet the victory is really only apparent. There is something in human nature which insists upon the incongruous and the disruptive. When men feel that the machine—or themselves moulded in its image—has begun to lose the power for mirth, there is likely to be the most ridiculous outburst of all—a war—in which the machines are set busily at the task of destroying each other, and all the restraints and orders of peace become the reproaches and disabilities of conflict. Men then promptly set at naught all that they have formerly professed to hold dear, and although the result is sometimes (as at present) a little more than bargained for, still it is satisfying. The attraction which war holds for people is not at all what pacifists usually imagine it to be; it is the itch to smash things, as children will break toys too complicated for their understanding, or throw stones at windows because they are too broad and too shiny to be resisted. It is impatience (nowadays at all events) with the machine. In the old days one might go out frankly for adventure and loot—war involved that. To-day, the adventure is dreary, and only the instigators get away with the loot. But the mood of conflict is a denial of order. Conflict is a change, and hence attractive. The Federal judge who barred Rabelais was right, but he was right for wrong reasons. Rabelais's alleged obscenity never hurt anyone old enough to read the childish pleasantries scrawled on the fence by urchins; but his mirth might destroy the machine. He made it ridiculous, and inevitably made its handmaiden, war, ridiculous along with it. For the only way to end war is through laughter, but laughter might destroy the institutions and the habits that make war possible. It would never do for the machine to crack a smile.

OFF GUARD.

UTTERLY absorbed, I read for an hour. Then, having come to the end I stopped. I looked up, realized what I had been doing and was immediately annoyed. The annoyance deepened into chagrin as I thought the matter over. "What can I do," I demanded, glaring at the inoffensive paper-back, "what can one

do to protect oneself against the idle avidity of the modern mind?"

Eventually the vexation passed, but not the problem. I had picked up an old battered copy of the New York *World Almanac* for the year 1890. Now I like old almanacs and yearbooks. Give me an old *Hazell's Annual* that is really out of date, and I assure you I can sit up half the night with it, with great pleasure and profit. I do not consider the time wasted, not a bit. After all, a compilation of the "principal events of 1886" throws, if not the proverbial flood of light, at least a clear, tiny beam into the general bedevilment of to-day. Not only does one "learn" things—and the older I grow the keener is my pleasure in "learning" things—but one gets from that highly compressed record of a long-forgotten and undistinguished year, a vivid sense of how modern time is recorded—by the dedication of silly buildings, the rise of mannikins to thrones and millionnaires to eminence; and above all—it is curious the effect this has upon one—one sees the great Victorians passing one by one. If one is really a child of one's time this is always impressive.

No, the fault lay not with the *World Almanac*. The fault, I freely admit, lay wholly with me. For in glancing through that dry and yet by no means lifeless compendium my eye caught an unusual heading: "Dangerous Counterfeits." It was a long and carefully detailed explanation—chiefly of course for the benefit of bank-clerks—of the way to detect the principal counterfeit Treasury and national bank notes in general circulation in the United States in the year 1889. Now I am not, was not then, and never can be, a bank-clerk; and since counterfeit money is usually in circulation for only a few decades, my rational self recognized that the article in question was of no practical value to me. It was assuredly no protection—if I needed any—against the ingenious counterfeit-craftsman of to-day. Yet, clearly realizing all this, nevertheless my mind kindled with curiosity. I attacked the article, I was immediately absorbed. On my desk a ship's chronometer ticked away warningly in its case. I paid no heed. Absorbed, I bent myself to the preposterous problem of how to detect, "at a glance," counterfeit notes which it would be practically impossible for me ever to glance at! The idle avidity of the modern mind!

Still, I must say the thing had its little surprises. I am almost ashamed to mention it, but I could not help being interested to see what a fearful amount of counterfeit bank notes flooded our currency during the Civil War. From 1862 to 1865 the engraving gentry were exceedingly busy. No doubt the great inflation of the currency at that time made it uncommonly easy to put spurious notes into circulation, but when I remark this—somewhat heavily, I fear, because I do not know much about these things—I must point out candidly that this was as near to an act of pure cerebration as I came during the hour's absorbed perusal. Most of the time I gave myself up luxuriously to items like this:

"\$5.00. National Bank Notes: In most of the Massachusetts counterfeits, the vignette of Columbus discovering America, at left, is imperfect; particularly the end of the ship's rail, upon which the sailor rests, shows no joint between it and the stanchion. Most of those of Pennsylvania have mustache of Columbus with stiff ends instead of first curling down."

Can anybody explain why that was interesting? Can anybody tell me why I licked that up with positive relish? Why, with half the world in ruins and with enough personal responsibilities to keep me fully occupied, why should I pause and say to myself:

"By George, I'd like to see one of those!"

But you, fortunate reader, are not like that. You, I am happy to think, have some perspective. If I should jog your elbow and say: "Look here, do you want to see a United States Treasury note with the word Treasurer spelt *Trastay*?" you would impatiently reply: "Go away. I am in the middle of Renan's 'Life of Jesus,' and I have no time for the indigestible rubbish of this rubbishy age!" Severe language, but unquestionably justified. Unquestionably.

I can not explain it. All I know is that I read on. Presently I perceived that while many of the Fives and Tens were so skilfully imitated that detection really was very difficult, depending upon the perception of the most minute irregularities, the work on the counterfeit Twenties was, for some curious reason, very crude. It was as though in playing for large stakes, so to speak, the counterfeiters became over nervous. They got rattled and they did the most stupid things. Says the *World Almanac*: "In nearly all the counterfeit Twenties of New York State the word 'Loyalty' over the Goddess of Liberty is indistinct. The features of the goddess are blurred, the face wild."

It is difficult to convey the delight that little item gave me. It was almost physical; I twisted in my seat with the

pleasure of it. The thought of the goddess of liberty "wild" upon a twenty-dollar bank note—well, it made me feel helpless, as though the world were so full of a number of things that there was really no time for the mere drudgery of earning a living!

But I must stop. After all, this sort of thing is a kind of debauch; I suppose it can be carried too far. Still, I am tempted to mention—just barely mention—the counterfeit Fifties in some of which the vignette of Justice on the back "has the bandage over her forehead instead of over her eyes" and those Hundreds which are to be detected by the fact that "the sailor in the boat has his mouth widely opened." And take the United States Treasury notes—but this is not fair. Well, perhaps I may just mention the counterfeit \$500 Treasury note which is all wrong: "Lobe of Adam's ear indistinct; button on coat nearest lapel is nearly square; upright which holds scale beam crooked; vignette's left foot is clubbed."

Well, there you are. Not all wastrels drink, some of them read. But it is not the reading, it is the curiosity that kills. For days and even weeks one trudges along manfully, *sans* ticket, *sans* passport, scarcely knowing the language of the illuminati, but faithfully determined to be seen among them; and then all of a sudden this sort of thing happens. It is really discouraging.

CHARLES THOMAS HALLINAN.

THE WAYS OF GODS.

Or likelier He,
Decrepid, may doze, doze, as good as die.

SUCH is the death of the strong gods. Like Saturn or the father of Saturn, they outlive their epoch. The strong gods are arrogant and cruel. They change from caprice to jealousy, to wrath: the day of vengeance is in their heart; their garments are sprinkled with blood; they travel in the greatness of their strength and are drunk with fury. These gods are sterile; they know neither how to sing nor how to weep; their cry is never the cry that delivers; the basis of their whim is fear. For when the voice of beauty or of tenderness is lifted among them, they shudder, are abashed and shake their heads. They finally age and disappear. Are they absorbed into the Quiet, as grubs grow into butterflies? No, not even this death awaits them: they have outlasted their appointment; their vitality is drained; they vanish utterly. The Quiet did not catch or conquer Setebos; he dozed, wondered, and was gone.

But did the god of Prospero outlive the god of Sycorax? There was no god of Prospero; for gods are created through experience and Prospero had none. Gods spring from poignant suffering; in the life of Prospero there was neither worship nor sanctity of tears. Hence his world was but an image of reason, an insubstantial dream. Without the cleansing of sorrow, even the strong gods can not be born.

The strangest gods of all are the false ones, the gods of evil. These, men create in order to propitiate the strong gods to whom they kneel. For as men do not altogether like themselves and yet long to do so, they do not altogether love their gods but would propitiate them. They endow them with attributes of evil, or give them messengers or rivals whom they call satans. "The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." Men become at times so enamoured of these gods of evil that they make them most attractive. In the creation of them, men are free; they give rein to their impulses, they shake themselves loose, they lavish upon these gods persuasive excellences which the strong gods often lack and which are naïvely associated with sin.

The heavens indeed reflect the earth, but on such an heroic scale that in the former place ideas become dissociated; good and evil frequently herd by themselves. This, of course, leads to confusion. When

a number of strong gods preside over a race, they are so watchful of their perquisites that they become quite worldly; all of them are more or less criminal—there is no place for a god of evil. But when these gods merge into one, his jealousy is directed towards his worshippers or towards the strong gods of other peoples: in the first instance he requires for his scourges a satan; in the second instance his crimes are the innocent crimes of war. His enemies are the gods of a noisome foreigner and are therefore evil. Dagon held a perfectly competent rule over the Philistines; of what he thought of Jehovah, the records are scant but they are clear. The chief weakness of these gods is perhaps that their emotion is always attaining its goal; they are too strong and handsome, too savage, perfect, far too unhuman. A few of them, to be sure, shift and blend; they adapt themselves to the changing ideals of their worshippers and pursue a destiny. Yet, in the spaces of the stars, there floats dust of many potent eclipsed ones.

Among the most lowly and immediately helpful gods are ancestors. These are by all odds the most frank and material, and when they are ancestors of very notable men or were themselves heroes before they became gods, their lives are prolonged through a respectable period. They are confined for the most part to hearths and temples; they busy themselves with a ritual. Yet it is said that they are not happy. They are restive; they wander; they long for the open; you can hear them sigh. Thus it is that they do not cling to life. Their ritual, if it has sunk into the hearts of their descendants, lasts much longer than they. Their restlessness may come from the fact that they are striving for a mystery; they wish to become less known, for otherwise they can not found a religion. And all about them they are aware of presences who follow streams, dwell in groves, preside over seed-time and harvest, are intimate with leafage, the life and death of the seasonal year. These divinities are of all hues and temperaments; they are radiant and sinister as nature about them; they cling to the earth and bring fire to it, yet some of them stray into the upper air; they light the stars and divine the course of the sun.

These are perhaps the oldest and most shrouded of the gods; they are at once the most intimate and the least known. They appear to live without purpose; therefore they are greatly feared and greatly loved. Some of them are misshapen; others possess supernal beauty. It is these latter that arouse the especial ire and suffer the attack of the strong gods. The victory, however, does not always rest with the latter, for these shrouded spirits have been with men so long that men mourn for them in defeat and do not easily let them go. When the Syrian damsels were lamenting in amorous ditties the fate of a beloved god, the infected daughters of Zion took up the strain and practised in the sacred porch dark idolatries. A voice once swept across the waves that great Pan was dead, but, though the oracles may have ceased, that voice expressed rather a fear than a wish; the sky flushed and the strong ones trembled. It is thus that dominant races, even in their victory, are in time absorbed by the spirit of those who harbour a long tradition.

Perhaps the strongest hold of these gods upon men resides in the fact that they are superfluous and unnecessary. In other words they lie close to the very principle of progress and satisfy a deathless yearning. The best of these gods provoke a longing for grace, for a life that is amiable and attractive; they are the

friends of play; they preside over music, fantasy, the arts, poetry. They do not moralize or remind men of eternal justice, but would take them out of the realm of duty, of reason and of necessity. Although they awaken a desire for the impossible and a regret for the irreparable, they also affirm that everything is false which does not wait on beauty.

If it is true that religion is the poetry in which we believe, and if, especially in the olden time, there was a constant tendency among gods and men to resemble one another, is it at all strange that some of these deities, without much ado, should have joined the hierarchy of the strong ones? These latter will not tolerate abstractions, and as soon as they become cognizant that such mighty forces as love and beauty dwell in the human spirit they give these forces authentic body and beckon them to their mountains. There these gods throw off their sable garments; they become swift and luminous as those about them, proud and severe. It is in these upper regions that the Fardarter presides over the muses, and from his heart-strings disengages the strains that build city walls and temples, that beget story or prompt antiphonals in music and in verse. It is in these regions that the Cyprian—but one speaks warily of the youthful, wave-born Cyprian. "Do you still worship her?" Sophocles was once asked in his old age. "Hush," he replied, "if you please, not so loud—I am not sure. Yet to my great delight I sometimes feel as if at last I had really escaped from that perilous one."

Many sages have held or have implied, in conflict with the scepticism of another group of sages, that man does *not* create the gods in his own image. They mean possibly that gods create men in *their* image; for there is certainly a resemblance between the two; or, more plausibly, these sages contend that gods are not created at all—they exist. It is a parlous doctrine to maintain, and indeed can not be reasoned upon at all satisfactorily, for it is more than likely to involve the death of every god except the one in whom these sages happen to believe. They would reply, of course, that these other gods never were. But what if their own belief did not remain constant? Well, that would not matter either; they had simply worshipped—created, shall we say?—a fiction. But when do these fictions cease? This looks suspiciously like the approach to the end of a depraved circle.

To take another, an allied discussion: a modern critic has averred that in matters of morals (or conduct, I suppose), religions—whether emanating from gods or men he does not say—are always right because they are inspired by feeling, and it is feeling that misguides us least. "My cat," for instance, "neither laughs nor cries; he is always reasoning." Were he not non-religious and amoral, he would be open to frantic misguidance. But to return. The word "feeling" appears to carry a significance that used to be expressed in the older word "faith," and faith, as a very distinguished investigator has said, "is being able to cleave to a power of goodness which appeals to our higher and real self, not to our lower and apparent self." He attaches faith to conduct. Yet this same investigator, a few pages on in the very book in which he has spoken about faith, quotes with entire approval the utterance of another master, "Reason is the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning *anything*, even revelation itself." Here a second circle verges towards corruption.

These debates remind one of that other fierce debate (not of the bird and the egg; that has just been

settled) whether this universe is, in the final analysis, material or idea. Here again, fortunately, there has been a serious division of opinion; it would be calamitous beyond endurance if all men dreamed alike. On the one hand, a sturdy fellowship maintains that if the world were not material, what would be the use? What would happen to those age-long investigations of science that have driven away the clouds of superstition, that have brought mankind to confront its world with dignity, have preached a siren gospel of work without fear? On the other hand, the idealists hold that it is they who have given science its very countenance. All that is known of the world is what men think; take idea out and the rest blows off in smoke. Thought—but it would be a misadventure to labour this discord further; it has been resolved. A notable philosopher has stated, hardly more than eighteen years ago, that the reasons of idealism plunge deep down into matter. Idealism means materialism, and conversely, materialism means idealism.

Now if this be true (and it surely proffers a weighty semblance of truth), if, to employ a cast-off jargon of the mathematicians, matter and idea are astride of parallel lines that actually meet, why, then, may not the same thing be said of faith and reason? Perhaps the same thing has been said; or, more to the point, why may not a like pregnant remark be made of gods created and gods existing? Anybody can match this puzzle to suit himself. We have reached the subject of the Great God, and, as poets often assume for a purpose a cosmology in which they do not believe, I shall frankly assume for convenience a rationale which I can not prove, namely: that men create their gods; yet in developing this precious theme, I shall frequently take for granted, as I have already taken for granted, that gods sway men.

The creation of a great god was, from whatever point of view, a spiritual necessity. The strong gods of the early poets did not satisfy philosophy; they remained poetic but not believable. They had become too well-known and worldly; instead of presiding, they interposed. Thus, although gods resemble men, if they are too human they die. Divinity is wrapped in kingship.

Fortunate indeed were those tribes whose genius had led them to combine their many deities into one god, for this presence could be both god and king. Furthermore, as men searched to the utmost depth their consciousness, they became aware of latent powers within them that demanded expression. To meet these revelations their king-god could take on new attributes; he could be constantly rediscovered, re-created; they could still place their faith in him.

He was their god of victory in battle, and as their battles were always righteous, he was their god of righteousness, their great joy. But what if their battles ended in defeat? We are moving too swiftly—the great god is complex.

A mighty ruler once invoked his deity, long before the Christian era, "I ask pardon of you; you are the father of the world. Be pleased, O God, to pardon my guilt as a father that of his son." And the Psalmist said: "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." The great god was not only a god of joy but of sorrow, not only a king but a father, and if he were a father, he himself suffered for the guilt of his children. To such a god defeat was victory; indeed there could be no

defeat. No sacrifice but that of spirit could propitiate him. He did not keep himself apart for the great, but succoured also the lowly. He was the god of a universal brotherhood, and inspired hymns of praise. Yet men found themselves alone with him, and when one enters his mystic bosom, there is silence.

The great god is said to have existed from the very beginning, and he has been worshipped for myriads of years; the pure in heart have always worshipped him. Yet no god has been more subjected to thought and speculation; thus he has become the most debated, and the most recent and permanent of the gods. But this god, for long periods, was submerged; instead of being patient, he has been accounted jealous; he constantly reappears in phantom form as a sort of tribal deity. "When the Tào was lost," said a Chinese philosopher, "its attributes appeared; when its attributes were lost, benevolence appeared; when benevolence was lost, righteousness appeared, and when righteousness was lost, the proprieties appeared. Now propriety is the attenuated form of leal-heartedness and good faith, and is the beginning of disorder." The great god has been at the mercy of his attributes.

He is the expression of the farthest reach of human idealism; he dwells in that nameless empyrean where faith and reason are one. Thus in his essence he is unrevealed. Some few ecstatic souls have caught glimpses of him, yet what they have experienced, most of them have not told. Others, and these are called prophets, have awakened from their vision to such horror and such love of the world about them that they have carried it as a burden to witness in life, in speech, in both, that union with their god. Yet what they have had to say has of compulsion lodged in symbols. In their simplicity and rapture, they have not known what denial is; their speech, however, has often been of great renouncements, of that deep curse of rejecting and destroying what is human and may be beautiful; and the reasoners have taken up the burden, and have made the great god sincere and vigilant. Thus he has been broken up into human attributes. Only in making him human have his worshippers found him real, an embodiment of their desires, of what they call truth, of their sorrow and of their joys. It is out of these that men have always made their gods.

A perfect god implies perfect men, and he is therefore unimaginable, a mere title, a dream. Benevolence, righteousness, love, have been his most enduring qualities, the very attributes from which men have found greatest satisfaction in themselves. But when they come to define these attributes, they are at a stand, for their humanity always thwarts them; it crashes through the barriers of words and makes towards reality. In self-revelation men lift the veil and discover their god.

Religion is therefore an art; the creation, let us say, of a life in some satisfying and therefore beautiful form. As there is no such thing as one symphony or one poem, so there is no such thing as one religion. The sages and the prophets have held mankind in the texture of their variousness. "Art," as one has said, "is local like wine, and also like wine it quenches the thirst of men from everywhere." Religion itself is local and racial; its ideal is not ultimate but is entangled in personality. The great believers have composed their religious music, and it has been so startling and new that men have said "This is false!" and they have stoned the witnesses. Then they have bethought themselves and have said, "Something beautiful has passed

our way. Surely this is our music too, this is what we have always wished to compose ourselves. It is our own; we will worship at this prophet's grave." It is thus that the death of a prophet is the birth of God; the great god always waits upon rebirth.

If it should ever come about that men should no longer be men as we know them, that they should have at last outgrown feeling, or should tire of it, and nothing but thought should be left, and thought should be life, then the great god himself will disappear. Nothing will remain but the Quiet, a vast tide of still energy that in movement seems asleep. And, as out of this ironic fabric, the awkward flights of chance and the baffled winging of necessity have shadowed this world as we conceive it, so there would come other presences shadowing a newer and still more tragic, joyous and illusory world. But we have as yet no means of naming it, or of knowing it.

EDWARD A. THURBER.

CONTEMPORARY AUSTRIAN WRITERS.

ALTHOUGH conditions in Austria have been unfavourable for writers during the past few years, there has been no marked curtailment of the literary output. A number of the abler Austrian writers have been brought together by the Leipzig publishing house of L. Staackmann. Though their writings are by no means homogeneous, these authors have become, in a sense, a large family through their publisher's hospitality at his southern villa in the summer. Some of them are represented by a long succession of works in verse or prose—Adam Müller-Guttenbrun, Franz Karl Ginzkey, Rudolf Hans Bartsch, Anton Wildgans, and others; together they ably set forth various aspects of their national life.

Among them is the veteran Rudolf Greinz. Unlike his brother Hugo, who was also a novelist in earlier days, he has not succumbed to the temptations of journalism. Nor may the number of his volumes be considered a just reproach of literary incontinence, when one considers their gradual accumulation over a number of years. His latest story, "Queen Home" ("Königin Heimat"), is a study of his beloved Tyrolean, of the disintegration that takes place in the characters of young villagers and peasantry when they are removed from their rugged labour and familiar restrictive customs and confronted by the seductions of a more easy-going life. Apparently Greinz does not agree with Mme. de Stael's doctrine of the ideal transferability of extra-national traits and manners; for it is the merely pleasurable, unalloyed by any conjoint responsibility, that attracts a group of these hardy peasants while they travel the roads of Europe and America as a troupe of yodellers. They who in their mountains withstood the storms of life instantly lose their cloaks in the sun of popular favour. We are given a carefully-drawn picture of the old Tyrol. There is development, progression; there are births, deaths, marriages, love-makings, competitions, businesses, the great world seen in the distance; and there is devotion to the homeland. "Vef" (Genovefa), standing in the doorway of her humble cot at sunrise, lifts her eyes to the peaks, as she had seen her uncle do at sunset, with hands folded, uncovered. She fancies a destiny ruling over the land from the heights, Queen Home; and if the Queen-homeland tyrannizes over her docile subjects, she also rewards them with solid affec-

tions, clear vision, and minds at peace, meting out the while disaster to renegades.

Rudolph Greinz's humorous tales have been no less heartily welcomed throughout the German-speaking world. He is without doubt the most significant of the Tyrolese authors, something indeed of a local chronicler; and the even quality of his workmanship justifies confidence in his future achievement.

It is a long way from the humour of Greinz to the fantasy of Karl Hans Strobl (author of "Gespenster im Sumpf," a story of Vienna in post-war days and a satire on American capitalists). Strobl, who is eleven years Greinz's junior, also has many volumes behind him. His first novels, of student-life at Prague, aimed at more or less faithful portraiture. He then fell under the influence of Hans Heinz Ewers, and attempted, among other things, the writing of fantastic tales. Constantly undertaking something new, and becoming less serious as an artist, this versatile writer has hitherto, at least until the present volume, contrived to retain the one indispensable quality: that of being interesting. While he has never been quite so popular as Greinz, his stories, especially the Bismarck trilogy, have been widely read.

While Franz Karl Ginzkey has written little of late, his "Rositta" stands out in shining prominence against the confused, ill-managed, stupid books which are so plentiful everywhere. This writer, whose earlier work was in verse, has remained essentially the poet, not in the manner of the execrable prose-poem, but in finesse, in sharpness of vision, imagery, purity of style, and in his outlook upon the world. Dr. Hugo Glaser has called "Rositta" the best German short story of the past year, and along with Hermann Hesse's "Demian" (Berlin: S. Fischer) the best recent (German?) short-story extant.

Although Rudolf Hans Bartsch dedicated to Ginzkey one of his later books, and the two were close friends, there is more dissimilarity than likeness in their point of view and in their work. Since the appearance of "Zwölf aus der Steiermark" some half-dozen years before the war, Bartsch's name has carried a certain weight, and his books have almost without exception had a large sale. Many critics still consider this his best work, treating with vigour, as it does, the political situation in Austria before the war, Austria's relation to Germany and contrast with the Slavs and its spiritual struggles. Since this book was written, he has, to a great extent, withdrawn from political problems, and is at his best in picturing the landscape and in catching the atmosphere and magic of Old Austria, of Vienna, of Graz and its surroundings, and of the south-Styrian vine-country. When, however, he has ventured into other fields, such as that of religious problems, his work has been wholly inconsistent and without significance. There is, for instance, in this category, a story about an officer—Bartsch was formerly an officer—and stories concerned with music, including a novel about Schubert the sale of which has approached 200,000 copies. A major concern with Bartsch, too, is the theme of love, and latterly, of tainted love masquerading as pure. It is said of him that he knows all the registers of love; at any rate he has shown great skill in expressing the nicest perceptions and gradations of *die Liebelei*.

"Heidentum" (1919) is in the form of an auto-

biography of the inner life of a supposititious hero with the ridiculous name—as he himself finds it—of Alarich Tusch. He is an architect, with a considerable appreciation of beauty in landscapes, façades, and women—or rather, a woman. The woman is an Austrian Helen, however, and he is not wholly fortunate. He then conceives the idea of saving the world by way of the Epicurean philosophy. It is a book of revery with an erotic strain, an avalanche of rather inconsequential states of mind and feeling. The great philosophy of A. Tusch is mostly mere wool-gathering, while the merest twaddle is passed off as deep wisdom. This, in Alarich Tusch, who has his virtues, might be pardonable if it were not so tedious. The author shows, in this story, his longing to escape from over-civilization to the simple life, a theme which is continued with no little effectiveness in his "Ewiges Arkadien!" of the following year. Thank God, he says, that the German people are poor; for "Poverty begets humility, humility begets industry, industry riches, riches pride, pride war, war poverty." Better the first arc of the circle. The epistolary form employed is perhaps hardly adapted to the intimacies which are here exposed to the Viennese intelligentsia by their correspondent, a former member sojourning in the country. But the author has indeed caught the magic of the country, of simple yet ideal life, of nature in her brighter and less sullen moods. This is Arcadia; but it is not the country of the peasant, not the country as Alfred Hugenberg, the Swiss author-farmer, knows it; there is nothing of nature's hardness or unconcern. It is rather the country of a holiday season, and as such it is highly enjoyable.

Bartsch's book of last year, "Seine Jüdin," is another matter. In a country which, like Austria, is disturbed by no Jewish problem, the reality of such a problem is largely discredited. In speaking of the Jew, Bartsch alternately allies himself with the Hebraic and the Aryan points of view, and under this double cover occasionally makes sly thrusts at Christianity, praises the Jews or laments their shortcomings. The marriage in this story of the reserved, almost eremitical young Aryan staff-officer with a Jewish beauty comes to an inevitable shipwreck after a dozen odd years, when her husband and the Aryan conception of things are no longer a mystery to the woman. The opposing viewpoints are set forth as distinct and uncompromising. For the rest, the narrative is a persistent if unsatisfying quest after a workable philosophy, and a pertinent criticism of some phases of the political situation.

Bartsch's novels are in reality long novelettes, and it is a question whether in the main he is not more successful with the briefer short story. His "Bittersüsse Liebesgeschichten" of a decade ago, contains excellent examples of his ability in this type of story. "Die Pfingstküsse," for example, has thoroughly caught the spirit of its world. A little of sentimentality, of preciousness is in it; qualities which are generally characteristic of this writer. Although still under fifty, Bartsch has apparently written himself out, and has already frequently repeated his performances; but what he has accomplished is by no means inconsiderable.

"Seine Jüdin" recalls another Viennese, not of the Staackmann group this time—Hermann Bahr. In America, Bahr is best known through two of his plays, "The Master," and "The Concert." He has tried his

hand at a dozen different literary forms, never wholly without effect, but most successfully in rather long and solid novels. In his views of life, as in the matter of literary fashions, he has repeatedly veered about. His marriage to a Jewess strongly affected his viewpoint, which for a time became almost Jewish. In "Die Rotte Korahs" (Berlin: S. Fischer), the fifth and last of a series of Viennese novels, he is again Aryan, with strong sympathies for the Jewish race, and more still for individuals of that race. He humanizes their problem. An aristocratic, thoughtful young officer, supposedly anti-Semitic, suddenly discovers himself the son of the Jewish magnate, Jason, who rules over many things, including the theatre, and who has become fabulously wealthy during the war. Jason, suddenly deceased, has made him his sole heir. This plunges him into a very complicated situation: shall he refuse the inheritance, or shall he accept it, and considering himself thereafter a Jew, reorganize—and spoil—his life accordingly? The problem is presented faithfully in all its aspects. The characters are admirable, amiable people: Ferdinand, the heir; his supposed father, who has reared him; the dashing yet humane general with the Hungarian name; the vivacious Baroness, Ferdinand's cousin; the young editor, his friend. Not, perhaps, a great writer, somewhat deficient in technique, and much less read than Bartsch, Hermann Bahr is always interesting, and writes with a certain gusto which ingratiates him with his readers.

Maria von Ebner-Eschenbach has left no successors, although some critics maintain that the Catholic novelist, Enrica von Handel-Mazzetti, very nearly approaches her. It is probable that most of the writers whom I have mentioned have accomplished their principal work or are unlikely to attempt anything strikingly different. Arthur Schnitzler has reached his sixtieth birthday; Hugo von Hofmannsthal's place is pretty definitely fixed: Jakob Wassermann has pre-empted a place of importance. How long he can retain it is questionable. In any event, the moment is favourable for the emergence of a new author who can sum up in himself the elements which have been lost through the long process of devitalization of the old order.

JOHN E. JACOBY.

IMPRESSIONS OF A PEOPLE.

It is a mark of republics that the people who live under them take them seriously. I do not mean that they have any illusions about the shortcomings of their own republic; they may be as cynical about it as any old diplomatist who lives behind the scenes of a monarchy; but they do take the republican ideal as a reality. This infuses a certain genuineness into their political life, a sort of everyday realism and spirit of practicality which one misses in monarchies, constitutional or absolute. The people's attitude towards a king is always romantic, a thing almost divorced from their average thoughts and preoccupations; it is not spoken of, because it is not a matter for thought or, therefore, for conversation: in every well established and flourishing monarchy it is almost a blasphemy to extend one's vocabulary, where the monarch is concerned, beyond the simple word "Hurrah!" or its equivalent. One can do nothing with a prince but crown him, applaud him and bury him; but one can change one's president, work for or against him, and discuss him with more freedom than one can one's next door neighbour. A republic becomes a part of one's activities in a more concrete sense than a monarchy. Behind them both stands, it is true, that icy, indifferent financial power which it is so difficult for men to comprehend or to credit, especially if they are disinterested citizens suffering under the illusion that honesty in themselves will always be answered by honesty in other people. But even here, the

more sceptical, practical and independent temper of the citizens of republics will probably make them the first to pull aside this more than sacred veil, for their attitude towards power of any kind is easy, and lacks that inhibiting quality, reverence.

One becomes aware of the vitality of the republican idea in Prague as soon as one enters the city. Whether one walks the streets or sits in the cafés, one hears a political din; it seems as if the whole people, old and young, after being denied all their life any voice in their political fate, had resolved at last to enjoy an orgy of self-government. They discuss politics, interests, grievances, new acts, with measureless delight: they enjoy their very difficulties because of the freedom with which they can discuss them. Their political passion bursts out everywhere: in the cabarets, where no evening passes without the singing of half-a-dozen patriotic songs in which every line ends with "*Cesky*" that does not end with "*Republika*": in the cafés where there are always two pictures, one of President Masaryk and one of President Wilson, staring at each other from opposite walls or hanging amicably side by side; in the *Sokols*, or gymnastic clubs, which in the old days of suppression did so much to encourage the Czechs in their struggle against Austria.

The new Republic is encompassed with difficulties. It has trouble with the large block of Germans still left in Bohemia as an unlucky reminder of the old Government: it has trouble with Slovakia, which considers that it is not being treated on an equality with Bohemia. It has an ocean of muddle left by the old Empire, and a new and inexperienced class of Czech officials who, like amateur Columbuses, are attempting to circumnavigate it; for all the Imperial officials were Germans. Yet in no country in Europe, perhaps, is there such a general feeling of hope. The temper of the people communicates itself to one at once, and one realizes that one is in a new and vigorous nation, and that the blasé, tired spirit of the longer-established nations, with too much of the past in them, here counts for nothing. It is a tonic for anyone suffering from a too old, too firmly established civilization to go to Prague and in the midst of confusion and hope, to see order, or any rate disorder, rising out of chaos. The Czechs are not tolerant and diplomatic; on the contrary, their vexations explode in periodical fits of irritation; but this impatient soil is the most fertile for experiment.

Nothing is more difficult than to catch, to set down, the generalized qualities of a people, and yet nothing is more necessary if one has temerarily begun to write of them. Emerson in his "English Traits" left a model of this kind of writing, in which the balance between intuition and observation was marvellously held; and yet in it he said things about the English which the English will never recognize as being applicable to them. Whether these things were therefore untrue—or true—is a different question, for the mental picture which a people has of itself is probably as incapable of being changed as the reality. "England," says the Englishman, and he means something quite different from what anyone else means when he utters the word. These are mysteries, and I make no pretence of penetrating a mystery so complex as that of the Czech people. My first impression of them was disappointing. They are Slavs, and yet they are not "Slavonic"; they are in their aspirations and in their traditions a Western European people, and yet they are not "Western." They have not the overpowering charm of the Russians, that charm which to Anglo-Saxons seems almost voluptuous in its richness; or the heroic and impossible qualities, the aspiration after the superhuman, which so many Serbs have. Their manners in public, on the other hand, to mention one of the achievements of Western civilization, are so atrocious, so helpless and at the same time so naïvely egoistic, that they set one in revolt until in a few weeks one manages to invent, in sheer self-defence, something quite as bad. During my first weeks in Prague I had an image of the crowds in the street as a multitude of elbows stuck out

in a hostile chaos. Only when, after six months, I went over the border to Dresden, did I realize what a pleasant thing it may be to walk along a crowded pavement. Czechs themselves have told me that their countrymen have the worst manners in Europe. This they attribute partly to the destruction of the Czech aristocracy after the battle of the White Hill (1620), partly to the alien tyranny under which, during the past three hundred years, the people have developed a constitutional growth. Naturally the Czechs did not wish to copy the manners of the foreign nobility, good as these were; they tried, rather, to express in their demeanour what they were forbidden to express in words. Under the Republic this boorishness by implication has been strengthened; bluntness is carried to a fanatical extreme, is embraced almost as a holy crusade. Bad manners have become almost a public duty, and the serried elbows of the Czechs are symbolical of republican fervour. There is nothing, after all, more democratic than an elbow.

The Czechs are shrewd, enterprising, very resourceful in all practical affairs, but individualists to a degree almost incredible to peoples who, like the Germans and the English, have a genius for collective action. Socialists in theory, they are in practice the most uncompromising individualists in Europe. It may be the very ardour of their individualism which makes them intellectually socialists, for socialism is at any rate a break with old tradition, an independent attitude; or it may be an instinct of self-preservation which warns them that a socialist theory and Government are necessary if they are not to be disintegrated by the violence of their individual wills. As it is, their ability in practical affairs has profited them little, simply because they have not made use of the advantages which come from collective action, the will to work together for the common and individual good. They are practical with tact, almost with genius, but in a manner which the Western nations have long left behind. They are content, both in their private and public works, with improvisations; and while these are marvellously ingenious, one knows that in other nations the same purposes are being better fulfilled with a fraction of the skill and artistic effort.

I spoke of the practical temper of the Czech people to a professor at the Prague University, an intelligent man and a patriot; and I became conscious immediately of the inadequacy of the implication. The Czechs, he told me, are misunderstood from both sides. They are misapprehended by the Russians because they have so many of the common and necessary virtues of the West, and by the Western peoples because they are, in spite of all disguises essentially Slavonic. More than any of the other Slavs, he said, they have the moral passion which in Europe is associated with England and America. In their intellectual lucidity, their perspicacity, their quick wit, they approximate in a curious way the French; but it is a mistake to conclude that they have lost that Slavonic temperament which is perhaps the most humanly universal thing that Europe has yet produced. They are the branch of the Slav people which stretches most saliently, most perilously, into the heart of alien Europe; they are the first Westernized Slavs but they remain Slavs. I listened sceptically, for I did not know much at that time of modern Czech literature, a literature more remarkable in its union of originality and naturalness than any other contemporary literature of which I can think. There at any rate, one gets a union of profundity and clearness, of naturalness and form, of warmth and discipline, which is satisfying because it is organic. This synthesis of qualities is not sought for; it is the racial and historical heritage of the Czechs, a rich, accumulated heritage; the fruit, now to be plucked at last, of their Eastern origin and their Western destiny. In the Czech writers there is no conflict between the two influences which one would have expected to find at war in them: the Russian and the French. This conflict they have escaped—or lost—through their almost unique fluidity. They have adapted themselves with such tact to the Western way of

life that they have actually become Western with an Eastern accent, it is true, but so naturally as not to appear bizarre; and though they are misunderstood by the Slavs and the French alike, one finds in them at last something normal and inevitable, something achieved by art, but achieved unconsciously and as by the working of nature itself.

But though there is no division horizontally in the Czech nature, there is a division vertically, or rather in that spiritual dimension where the terms "vertical" and "horizontal" are alike meaningless. They have in them a vein of black melancholy, a bitter, hidden complex which makes them sometimes moody and envious, and full of that sardonic contempt which is one of the countless forms of self-contempt. With all their adaptability, their capacity, their temperamental resource, they are an obscurely disappointed people. This makes them capable of acts of incredible meanness, thrown out defiantly, one feels, as a sort of violent declaration to the world and to themselves, of that universal human meanness which they will not ignore. When they are mean, it is a tormented declaration that humanity is so, a sort of throwing of human corruption in the face of humanity. The Czechs are always sceptical about their good actions, and seek relief by committing sins to refute them. This is in them, as in so many other Slavs, an unresolved torment, a continual testing of the soul from which they can not escape; and in the end it proves nothing, or rather it only proves the conviction with which they began. The paradox is that this people, almost pathological on one side, have on the other an idyllic, almost Arcadian capacity for joy. Their early-morning, virginal flawlessness in emotion it is impossible to catch in prose; but it pervades their poetry, even when it is most melancholy and most mordant, and it appears in undisguised *naïveté*, in the music of Dvorak and Smetana. It is a natural elegance, a spontaneous, finished grace which, once one has known it, one prefers even to the cultivated and seductive charm of the French.

EDWIN MUIR.

PHANTOM.

XXIX

ONE day when I went to Aunt Schwab's, not looking like the same person—"clothes make the man!"¹—in the suit that I suppose was already the fruit of a swindle, and treated her to the same high-flown expressions about wealth and poetic fame that I had used on the clothes-dealer, she was still so wont to hear from me only the simplest, purest truth that she swallowed the whole thing. She was as unsuspecting as every one else but myself of the poisonous sting that was buried in me and that would not be festered out in any wise. She had not even learned anything of the crisis that had driven me about without ceasing for almost twenty-four hours.

Aunt Schwab was my well-wisher. She was interested in everything whereby my advancement in the world could be promoted. And as she had a high opinion of me, as already noted, my emergence as a poetic genius seemed to confirm her faith in me in an admittedly rather surprising manner.

I told her that a certain Dr. Stark—I was surprised at the ease with which I made a Ph. D. out of the master-bookbinder!—a Dr. Stark, then having found out about the poems which I had been occasionally tossing off for years, had congratulated me in inimitable terms and prophesied a brilliant future for me. He was just writing an article in which he would make me known as the newly rising star. A paper in Munich would at his instance print some of my poems and had sent me an advance instalment of 500 marks. I can still see how my aunt's eyes grew bigger at these bold impostures. Finally I detected in her a frankly joyful surprise which almost sobered me for a moment. But the fleeting manifestation of my conscience was washed away by the stream of events. My aunt accorded my communications an im-

¹Translator's note. Both a proverb and the title of a well-known short story by Gottfried Keller.

portance that surprised myself, and immediately fetched a bottle of wine to celebrate the occasion with me.

Now while we were emptying the bottle I observed that I had become an interesting personality to Aunt Schwab, and that she was now surveying me with a sort of timid respect. This alteration flattered me so greatly that I, seized by a sort of megalomania, involved myself more deeply in my web of lies and illusions.

To my horror I recognized that Aunt Schwab had blindly taken on faith even what I had only meant, from my point of view, as a joke. The service of destroying my tissue of falsehoods by a dry jest, such as she had at command on occasion, she seemed for this time wholly unable to render me. Instead of being sobered, I found my intoxication only increased both by her words and the unaccustomed drink. On this day she was of a positively unlawful credulity that was fateful for us both.

So I ventured to yield to the temptation of hinting to her darkly about a matrimonial venture which, as I let her guess, the mysterious Dr. Stark had urged upon me. I had seen the girl, spoken with her parents, had been introduced into the wealthy house by him. Of course my future bride had been won over to me by my poems, as she had given me to understand by word and sign. I finally remarked in passing: it was a pity that for lack of adequate means I was still condemned to an all-too-modest, all-too-cautious procedure.

I regarded it as wholly out of the question that this woman, her wits especially sharpened in such matters through her profession, would bite at so crude a bait. But she swallowed it unquestioningly, so that surprise and painful terror made an icy chill run down my back.

On that day I went from my aunt's with a thousand-mark note which she had lent me, a sum that made me dizzy. Till then I had actually never even held such a note in my hands.

XXX

Every step in life is fateful, hence I had rather not apply that term to this day, and especially to that step and that second which took me out of Aunt's house into the street.

There brooded over the city one of those burning summer nights that are not rare in Breslau.

As I now stepped into the street, I heard my name called by a man who was going into my aunt's house. It was a certain Vigottschinsky, a man of unfailingly neat dress and of youthful appearance, whose age was, however, not easy to determine. He went in and out at my aunt's, as I knew, and was well liked by her, doubtless by reason of his jolly nature. To this day I do not know the nature of the relation between them. Only this is certain, that obscure business dealings played a part in it.

Vigottschinsky then, for that was the man's name, spoke to me and asked whether my aunt were at home. I said yes, and expected that he would go right up to see her. Instead of that he went on to ask, as I was proceeding, whether he might walk a little way with me.

It is not at all clear to me whether he had certain designs upon me even at that time.

Vigottschinsky's manner was engaging, like that of all the Viennese. I must not be surprised if he sought to make my closer acquaintance. Old Miss Schwab always spoke of me in the highest terms, and he was certain that no other than myself would be the rich lady's heir.

XXXI

These words, and the entire meeting, affected me not unpleasantly. The false exaltation in my breast had not yet gone stale, and the process of self-deception and self-befuddling was in full swing. It suited me to find a person towards whom I could go on playing the part of a made man.

Vigottschinsky proposed that we should drink a glass of beer in one of the gardens along the promenade.

So there we sat together till midnight, and never wearied of pouring out our hearts to each other.

I have never had any friends, and the pleasure, nay the happiness of such an exchange of confidences was hitherto unknown to me. Moreover, Vigottschinsky was

without question a taking personality, whose advances flattered me.

He had taken extensive journeys, knew the great seaports from Hamburg down to Naples, and knew Vienna, Berlin, London, Paris, and Rome. I shall never forget how fascinatingly he could talk.

All told, it was a wonderful summer night beneath the soft rustle of the chestnut-tree tops in the illuminated garden, festively enlivened by gay people, with the lonesome cries of the swans floating over from the city moat. In one of the other gardens near by a band was playing, and the music reached our ears in muffled tones.

Vigottschinsky was really astonished and much interested to learn of my literary bent and my first successes as a poet, which I probably set forth to him in a considerably more fantastic shape than to my aunt. It came out in this connexion that he was, from my point of view, astonishingly well read. From him I heard for the first time the name of Dostoevsky, which from that time on is inseparable from my destiny.

In this night the fantastic structure which I had erected above and around me underwent a marked consolidation.

It was the sweet wound in my soul, the elegant suit I had on, my first friend, the atmosphere of self-deception and false ostentation in which I had this day advanced so successfully at Aunt Schwab's, it was my fancied poetic glory and the faith of my aunt, the faith of Vigottschinsky in it, the perfume of strange lands that Vigottschinsky brought with him, it was the summer night, the wholly unwonted enveloping flood of light and festivity, the equally unwonted drink and, by no means least of all, the thousand-mark-note in my pocket—it was all this together that completed my befogging and intoxication.

It is inevitable in such nocturnal sessions that sooner or later the conversation will turn upon the relations of the sexes. Of course this is probably the favourite topic anyway. But in a Breslau beer-garden, during a hot summer night, it might only be avoided by one who was blind and a deaf-mute besides. After all, it is here that the world of prostitutes and their doubtful hangers-on mingles with the populace, and you see the flower of the city daughters, in their light-coloured summer dresses, and the provocative finery and display of the local *demi-monde*, mingling in a motley throng.

Of course Vigottschinsky and I were also attentive to this throng during our conversation. We were constantly being attracted by some new apparition.

Vigottschinsky did not dream of the divine miracle of purity and loveliness with which I secretly compared each one of these apparitions, whereupon I hurled them down into Hades.

Vigottschinsky was informally accosted by several magnificent ladies. But he seemed not to be in the requisite mood and to prefer my company to theirs. And they on their part seemed to know him sufficiently to respect his whim.

He spoke very slightly of them.

Yet by his own account he must have lived the most licentious life.

His accounts were of a shamelessness that frightened me. Orgies in which he had ostensibly participated in houses of ill fame were connected with incidents that can not be narrated, so absolutely bestial and animal and ruttish were they.

He must have been positively a frightful scourge to the harlots that he took into his service. And of course that came to light in the court-proceedings. That is also revealed in his expenditure of the plunder, which he squandered in a few wild nights.

I never saw him again after the announcement of the sentence. As the King did not exercise his pardoning power, he was executed on a Monday at five o'clock in the morning.

Well, I certainly cut a despicable figure before him as I raved about an unnamed ideal of divine beauty and innocence, the original of which, by the way, I naturally did not betray.

I can not say that he showed any disdain or scorn in face of my eulogies. Instead he sighed, as I remember

very distinctly, and said that if I had the faintest hope of attaining such an object of my love I should be the most fortunate of men. He could no longer count on such bliss. As I view things to-day, I am astonished that I found it possible, in the presence of the vile and deeply depraved man that his own erotic confessions even at that time unquestionably made him appear to be, to lift the veil from a sacred secret even as far as I did, and to respond to his bestial confessions by the prostitution of my spiritual shrine.

Before we went, I changed the thousand-mark-note. What I had eaten I could easily have paid for without it. But I could not resist the itching desire to put on airs with my wealth.

The adventures with Aunt Schwab and Vigotschinsky took place before Master Stark had got my poems back. This failure, which he ascribed to the initial blindness of men in the face of everything new and great, was unable either to eradicate my conceit or to sober me in any way.

I felt at some moments, in fact mostly, that something within me must be out of plumb. Once again I was as if in that dream where you see splendid and paradisaean landscapes, go strolling among them with rapture and astonishment, and still can not free yourself of some persistently gnawing torment.

My good mother noticed of course, as she told me later, a marked change in me. I had become silent towards her. I no longer revealed to her, as formerly, all the stirrings of my soul. I went out without saying whither, which I had never done before. As from a great distance I would sometimes see her eyes fixed on me, questioning, thoughtful, distressed, but even such glances had no more power over me.

And those other glances that Marie Stark directed at me in similar spirit had no power over me. An instinct told me that I must give her and Master Stark no inkling of the scope of my poetic presumption, and still less of the imagined matrimonial project. They saw that I was altered, that I dressed foppishly and expensively, and that even in my way of life I no longer wished to be the retiring Philistine I had been. I told them that I and Aunt Schwab had plans that were already bringing me in some money, but that would in time bring me a fortune. In a similar way I tried to make plausible to my mother the new lavishness that naturally seemed strange to her.

Even at that time Master Stark and his daughter revealed that trait of character to which I owe my deliverance. One may simply designate it as loyalty. It was based upon an affection for my person which was expressed with equal warmth and constancy by father and daughter. It was motherly in the daughter, fatherly in the old man, and in both it was with a degree of feeling that bears and hopes and understands everything, and is at all times willing to share any sorrow, to shoulder any burden, to make any sacrifice. To be sure, I did not at that time get beyond a vague feeling of the treasure that I possessed in these two people.

I was actually suffering already from an arrogance that made me see in them creatures who were far beneath me, to whom I must condescend.

As for my little municipal post, I very soon found that too beneath my dignity. I was slack in my work and unpunctual besides. When I got a wiggling one day on this account, I flared up haughtily and declared that I did not need to wear myself out for starvation-wages in the service of a city that was rolling in wealth. That meant my dismissal.

Nevertheless, the affair was finally straightened out by my office-chief, who was a well-wisher of mine.

GERHART HAUPTMANN.

(Translated by Bayard Quincy Morgan.)

(To be continued.)

MISCELLANY.

THE old town of Nantucket still remains with me as a vivid and pleasant memory. Its charm, like that of other New England towns, especially seaboard towns, is in its suggestions of strong and effective individuality. I saw some houses that were really rather ugly, yet they had

this charm; they were unstandardized, planned and built and dwelt in by an unstandardized spirit, and there was good, sturdy, individualist artisanship in them. The depressing thing about our newer towns is their uniformity, or rather, the testimony that they bear to the submergence of individuality in the people who make them. It is true of household gods as of greater deities that, as the Psalmist puts it, "they who make them are like unto them"; man never knows how anthropomorphic he is until he sets out to fashion his Lares and Penates. No advantage of climate or situation, no pervading spirit of opulence, no apparatus of mechanical convenience, could ever make up to me for the absence of such charm as is in Nantucket; in the town, that is. I am not deeply fascinated by the island; the much-belauded moors are very fine, I suppose, for anyone who cares for moors, but those who care for them may have my share. They may also have my share of the mosquitoes that infest those moors. I will even throw in my share of the coast, which is pretty ineffectual beside that of the South County of Rhode Island. But the town just suits me; I could be happy in its charm, placidity, remoteness, I could delight in its longevity, as long as I live, I think. For some reason, too, there were more good-looking people about than I have seen together for some time. Perhaps they all happened to be on the street the day that I was there, and the others were out of view; but even so, there were a good many, considering the probable total population of the town.

ANYONE who wishes to know how simple the "labour-problem" really is should study it in Nantucket. There is one large natural resource about Nantucket that remains unmonopolized, i. e., fish. Anyone may fish who wants to, and do well out of it, and nearly every one knows how. The consequence is that if one wants to get any artisan's work done, one has to pay the artisan as much as he could make by fishing; otherwise he will fish. Wages, in short, and the general conditions of labour all over the island, are automatically regulated by the presence of this one unmonopolized natural resource. As long as there remains free access to fish, there is no way to exploit labour. Well, if access to *all* resources were free everywhere, labour would be absolutely unexploitable, the relations of labour and capital would automatically become natural. Then we should have real and free competition, and industry would resolve itself into a real competitive system, quite as it is in Nantucket. If the reader would like to get a practical idea of it, let him go up there and bargain with a carpenter. There are good artisans in Nantucket, and they are starchy and self-respecting; they have a natural pride of workmanship, which they can afford to have, because there is no way to make them work on any but their own terms, as long as the fish hold out. They do not unionize, do not strike, do not care a fiddler's commission about "the principle of collective bargaining." That is all there is to the labour-problem anywhere in the world. Karl Marx saw that; what he did not see, unfortunately, was that after he had written his one short chapter on colonization, he should have published it by itself, and put all the rest of the huge bulk of "Das Kapital" in the stove.

ALMOST the first thing I did on arriving in New York was to go to see a piece called "La Tendresse," from the French of Henri Bataille. I was reminded of Goethe's insistence that a poor play should always be done by good actors. This play is sheer drivel; yet the two principals, Mr. Miller and Miss Chatterton, acted so capably that I was really interested in seeing what they could do against its almost malevolent dullness and insipidness, and so the evening passed well enough up to the last act; no conceivable skill could triumph over that, although Miss Chatterton and Mr. Miller—poor souls!—went down with their colours flying. They are by no means great actors, but they are good actors, good enough to lend considerable distinction to any piece, probably, that they will ever be called upon to play. As I went homeward, ruminating over the evening, I perceived as never before that Goethe

was right. Two capable actors are able—barely able, but they do it—to keep one from perishing miserably of inattention while “*La Tendresse*” drags its length along. What if they had been incompetent or even indifferent actors?

“*LA TENDRESSE*” seems to turn upon the fact that for physiological reasons a middle-aged man can not succeed very well in a protracted love-affair with a well-set-up and chipper young woman. Well, there is nothing particularly forceful about this; every one knows it, just as every one knows that a middle-aged man can not make much of a success at base ball or the hundred-yard dash. No one expects a middle-aged man to succeed in any of these pursuits, and when a middle-aged man undertakes one of them nobody has any sympathy for him and he is put down by common consent as *quoad hoc* an ass. The further implications of the play are that the buxom and skittish young light-o’-love ought not to be judged too harshly if she forages about a bit in search of satisfactions otherwise not to be had, and permits a faith unfaithful to keep her falsely true. There are differences of opinion about this, and probably no opinion would be much modified by seeing “*La Tendresse*”; the play is not convincing enough. The piece ends with a healing of the breach brought about between the lovers by the young lady’s amatory excursions, and the hint of a sort of pale compromise for the future upon “tenderness.”

THIS is natural too; natural and commonplace. When a man has rolled back around in the free-and-easy world of the Parisian theatre for fifty-five years or so, what he really wants is peace—peace and quietness, and freedom from the more exigent of feminine allurements, and plenty of time to ponder upon his sins and wish there had been more of them. At this stage, equally naturally, a little tenderness, if one can find anybody to furnish it, rather tends to reconcile one to one’s circumstances, to ease one down into a more graceful acceptance of a sober, righteous and uninteresting life. But what is there in all this, that a dramatist should wish to make a play of it, and why should Mr. Miller and Miss Chatterton waste good acting upon such a play? If this is the kind of thing that the French play-writers are doing, I think I can contemplate the disintegration of French civilization with considerable composure.

JOURNEYMAN.

THE THEATRE.

THE ART OF ACTING.

THE art of acting is a miscellaneous sort of art. I imagine that types of acting which we think very new and modern were to be found in every age except the first. Probably some famous Greek comedian made his entrance in “*The Frogs*,” looking so amazingly like the statue of Herakles on the Acropolis that for half a minute nobody could be sure that this was really the actor whom he had expected to see. In Shakespeare’s day it is not unlikely that the man who played Caliban got together a collection of false hair and wooden tusks which made every one wonder who the new member of the company could be; while, on the other hand, there were probably among the Greeks and the Elizabethans, players so amazingly like servants or kings in face and carriage that they never played anything else. Yet it is safe to say that the actor’s trick of trying to look like a different human being in each new play and never like himself, and his other trick of never looking like anything but himself and always playing exactly the same kind of part, are histrionic symptoms of the disease called realism. There was never so much literal and deliberate impersonation as in Europe to-day, or so much “type-casting” as along Broadway.

These are two very different methods of acting, but they both reach the same end—absolute resemblance—

and neither has necessarily anything to do with art. The first—for which the word “impersonation” is usually and very loosely used—is pretty generally esteemed to-day. It is supposed to mark off the actor, even the artist, from the crowd of clever mummers. It is hard to deny an instant and hearty interest in any player who can look and act like a tramp one night, and like a barbaric king the next. The emotion he creates as a king, or the artistry that he displays in selecting his material and making Form out of it, may be great or small. But his ingenuity in masquerade will always win admiration. In fact, we are pretty sure to praise such an actor as Ben-Ami for looking like a neurotic artist in “*Samson and Delilah*” and like a husky young horse-thief in “*The Idle Inn*,” instead of estimating just how much artistic distinction either impersonation shows.

Examined in cold blood, the virtue of this sort of acting is the virtue of the wigmaker. The difference between a Van Dyke and a pair of mutton chops; the difference between flesh colour no. 1 and flesh colour no. 3; the difference between a waiter’s dress suit bought on the Bowery, and a doublet designed by James Reynolds and made by Mme. Freisinger—that is the secret of this kind of acting. Not the whole secret, of course; for the pose of the actor’s body, the grace or awkwardness of his carriage, the lift of an eyebrow, or the droop of a lip is quite as important. In such things, however, there is no more art or emotion than in the tricks of make-up. It is not until the actor gives Form to this lay figure, by the movement of his body, and the emotion of his voice, that anything approaching art can be said to exist. Stanislavsky may look like a colonel in “*The Three Sisters*,” and like a spineless gentleman in “*The Cherry Orchard*”; but that is not the measure of his art; he would still have to prove himself an artist.

There is an amusing similarity and contrast between the two kinds of realistic actors. The first impersonates a different character in every play, and never himself. The second impersonates the same character in every play and always himself. The first impersonates by changing; the second by remaining the same.

Type-acting need not mean that the type the actor plays is absolutely identical with his own personality in private life. It usually is not. But it does mean that, because of his own personality, his physical and mental equipment, the actor is able to play a type very similar to his own. Two excellent examples of this are Frank Craven and Ernest Truex. In real life they are never Tommy Tucker of “*The First Year*,” or the hero of “*Six-Cylinder Love*,” but on the stage they are never anything else. It is just possible that they could be something else; but they began this way, and this way the managers and the public will probably make them continue.

A nice æsthetic point arises if one finds a type-actor—say Craven—giving an extraordinarily good performance. He is playing himself, we will say; but within that familiar personality, he is creating emotion quite as interesting as that which some other actor of a different personality, but possessing the knack of varied impersonation, could create; he is even reaching a sense of Form, selecting out of his own personality, experience and emotion, and combining these into a shape that moves us æsthetically—whether to laughter or to tears. Is this art? Would it be art if the actor were Georgie Price imitating Craven, or somebody from the Moscow Art Theatre imperson-

ating Craven? Would it be art if Craven played a character as different from himself as the savant in "He Who Gets Slapped," and played it as successfully as he has played Tommy Tucker? Unquestionably the answer to the last question would be, Yes. As for the others, there is legitimate room for argument.

This business of varied impersonation versus self-impersonation arouses a great deal of dispute. The most interesting feature of the argument is that usually the opponent of self-impersonation or type-acting points back with mournful pride to some of the great actors of the past, such as Booth or Forrest. When he does this, he passes clean outside of realistic acting. Moreover, he brings into the argument actors who, while they played a wide variety of parts, never took the trouble to hide behind the wigmaker or to pretend to be anybody else physically than the great Edwin Booth or the celebrated Edwin Forrest.

To-day we have this same kind of acting, I imagine—and this is the third kind of which I want to speak—in the work of Sarah Bernhardt, Giovanni Grasso, Margaret Anglin or Clare Eames. If one started out to list the players who use their own mask frankly for every part, achieving impersonation and emotion by their use of features and voice as instruments, one would find many more names of women than of men; for the actress has far fewer opportunities than the actor to employ the ingenuities of make-up. One would also find, I think, that the list was not so very long, and that it contained the names of most of the players of great distinction from Eleanora Duse to Charlie Chaplin. There is magic in the soul of such players, not in their make-up boxes. They create their impersonations before you, not in their dressing-rooms.

Such acting may be given—and usually is given—to the interpretation of realistic drama. It achieves the necessary resemblance through the inner truth of its art. But it never submits to submergence. It reaches out towards a kind of acting that we used to have and that we shall have again, while it meets the necessities of realism.

This fourth kind of acting may be called presentational—a word that derives its present use from a distinction set up by Alexander Bakshy in his "The Path of the Russian Stage." Presentational acting, like presentational production, stands in opposition to representational. The distinction is clear enough in painting, where a piece of work that aims to report an anecdote, or to photograph objects, is representational, and a piece of work striving to show the relation of forms which may or may not be of the everyday world, is presentational. In the theatre, Bakshy makes a parallel distinction between a scenic background that attempts to represent with canvas and paint actual objects of wood or rock or whatnot, and a background that presents itself frankly as what it is—curtains, for instance, or an architectural wall. The distinction applies to acting as well. A Broadway actor in a bald wig or an actor naturally bald, who is trying to pretend that he is in a room in Budapest, and who refuses to admit that he knows it is all a sham, and that a thousand people are watching him, is a representational actor, or a realist. An actor who admits that he is an actor, and that he has an audience before him, and that it is his business to charm and move this audience by the brilliance of his art, is a presentational actor.

It is obvious enough that the first actors were presentational. The Greek men who shouted village gossip from the wains, and made plays of it, were villagers known to every one. The actors in the first

dramatic rituals may have worn masks but they were frankly actors or priests, not the gods and heroes themselves. Roscius was Roscius, Molière was Molière; even the Baconians can not deny that Shakespeare was Shakespeare when he appeared as old Adam. I would maintain that Garrick and Siddons, Talma and Rachel were frankly actors; did they not see the audience out there under the light of the same chandeliers that lit their stage?

To-day our greatest players re-establish to some extent the bond with the audience when they abandon any attempt to represent their characters through wigs and make-up, and rely frankly on their own faces as vehicles of expression. In comedy and in tragedy presentational acting comes out most easily. There is something in really great sorrow—not the emotions of the thwarted defectives of our realistic tragedies—that leaps out to an audience. Hecuba must speak her sorrow to the chorus and over the chorus to the people who have come to the theatre for the single purpose of hearing it. There can be no fitting communion with the characters who have caused the tragedy or have been stricken by it. The sufferer must carry her cup of sorrow to the gods; they alone can drink of it and make it less; and the great fact of the theatre is that the audience are gods. It is a healthy instinct that causes many an actress in a modern tragedy to turn her back on the other characters of the play, and make her lamentation to the audience as though it were a soliloquy or an aside.

There are gods and gods, of course, and it is to Dionysus and Pan that the comedian turns when he shouts his jokes out across the footlights. In fact, he takes good care, if he be a wise clown, that the footlights shall not be there to interfere. If he is Al Jolson, he insists on a runway or a little platform that will bring him out over the footlights and into the lap of the audience. If he is a comedian in burlesque, like Bobbie Clark, he has the house lights turned up as soon as he begins a comedy-scene. He must make contact somehow with his audience. If the fun-maker is Fanny Brice, the method is a little less obvious, and it draws us closer to the sort of presentational acting which will dominate many theatres in the future, the sort of acting that presents an impersonation, and at the same time stands off and watches it with the audience. If the player is Ruth Draper or Beatrice Herford, you have something that seems to me almost identical with the kind of acting I am trying to define.

I present these four categories of acting for what they are worth. They are frankly two-dimensional. They are divisions in a single plane. Other planes cut across them, and the categories in these planes intersect the ones I have defined. Consider almost any player, and you will find a confusion of methods and results which will need more explanation than I have provided. There is Richard Kellerhals, for instance, the Munich player whose work in "The Taming of the Shrew" is so strikingly different from his work in "Florian Geyer." This is not impersonation achieved with make-up. It is a thing of expression, a spiritual thing. The actors of the Moscow Art Theatre use make-up to the last degree, but with them there is always a spiritual differentiation far more significant than the physical, and there is always a sense of the Form of life which is more important than either. Harry Lauder has one impersonation—"The Safest of the Family"—which is so different from his others in almost every way that for the moment he might

be a different player. Here is a presentational actor indulging in the tricks of the realistic impersonator, and showing that, while the fields of realistic impersonation and presentational acting are not absolutely exclusive, at least they are somewhat incongruous. Louis Jovet of the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier presents an opposite phenomenon when he appears in the realistic drama "Les Frères Karamazov" as the horrific old father, Feodor, and in "Twelfth Night" as Aguecheek. These are absolutely contradictory impersonations. In each case, Jovet completely disguises his own personality. The interesting point is that the physical impersonation which he brings to the Russian play is essentially unrealistic. It is all very carefully designed in costume, make-up, and gesture, as a broad and striking expression, but not as a representation, of rough dominance. The red face and the green coat mix in the olive-bronze hat. His hair and his hat, his coat and his elbows flare out in lines of almost comic violence. He is very close to caricature in a thoroughly realistic play. Here is a curious mixture of methods and ends—planes and categories cutting across one another and creating new figures.

Copeau's Vieux-Colombier is to-day the most interesting forcing-bed of the new acting in Europe—unless the Kamerny Theatre of the Russian expressionists is nourishing more than scenery. Copeau's theatre, with its naked stage and almost permanent architectural setting, its lack of proscenium and footlights, and its steps and fore-stage leading down to the audience, makes unquestionably for presentational acting. The illusion of realism and representation is extremely difficult to attain. In four plays, "Les Frères Karamazov," "Twelfth Night," "The S. S. Tenacity," and "Le Carrosse du St.-Sacrement," varied as they are, we see no great amount of the sort of masquerading which Jovet does so well in the first two. In the main, the actors keep their own normal appearance throughout; but they are not, of course, playing types. To some extent, therefore, they are working in the vein of Bernhardt and Grasso, striving for impersonality in emotion rather than in physique. In almost all the acting at the Vieux-Colombier, there is something intellectually settled upon as an expression of an emotion, and then conveyed to the audience almost as if read and explained. In the school of Copeau, who was once journalist and critic, there is ever something of the expounder. It is reading, an explanation, in the terms of a theatrical performance. It is, to a certain degree, presentational, because in every reading, in every explanation, there must be an awareness of the existence of the audience.

KENNETH MACGOWAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE BUSINESS OF LAW.

SIRS: May I tell you how glad I was to come upon your articles touching on the profession of the law? In my home town the people are proud of their new court-house, which some of our local orators call "The Temple of Justice." Alas, I fear the temple is badly in need of cleansing; this suspicion is grounded on my acquaintance with the seventy members of the bar who constitute the priesthood therein. Though there was a time in the South when law was practised as a liberal profession, that time has long since passed; law is now a business of which the sole aim is money. Not long ago our leading civil lawyer said, "I have nursed my business from the beginning." Our leading criminal lawyer has grown rich, partly from real-estate speculation, and partly also by fees taken from men so frightened at the prospect of trial for life that they could not refuse to mortgage their last acre.

A few days ago I asked a young attorney, "Is there a

single lawyer at this bar who cares more for justice than for money?" He answered that there were possibly three. Another young attorney let drop this sage reflection: "The practice of law seems to me to resolve itself into obstructionism—the most successful lawyers are those who have the greatest ability to frustrate the law." Inquiring what chance a defendant has to get justice from a jury-trial, I was by one practitioner informed thus: "Why, the chance is not very great: in the struggle between lawyers, the life, liberty, and property of the defendant are lost sight of, and the jurors take sides with one lawyer and against another." Two of the most eminent and most promising young lawyers of the community admitted to me that they had concocted a false affidavit in order that a client of theirs might get possession of an automobile. The more objective-minded lawyers display a remarkable candour in confessing a total lack of faith in their own profession. But, on the other hand, my neighbours and fellow-townsmen at large are generally disposed to admire, honour, and look up to the lawyers, so that while I have never heard a father advise his son to become a school-teacher I have been much impressed by the eagerness with which some parents urge their sons to study law. I am, etc.,
E. B.

DISHONOUR AMONG THIEVES.

SIRS: It was said by the historian of the Crimean war, that the following refrain of the popular hit of 1854 had more to do with England's decision to attack Russia than all the debates between Lords Palmerston and Aberdeen and Russell, who were the Lloyd Georges and the Balfours and the Curzons of that day:

"We don't want to fight
But, by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the men, we've got the ships,
We've got the money too."

Great Britain has, for the last few days, been in continuous preparation for war in the Near East, although England was never more inclined to peace, since peace was never so essential and so imperative to the interests of "Humanity and Civilization," two interests with which the British Commonwealth is most surprisingly skilful in identifying itself whenever things come to a bad pass. It might be added for the information of the uninitiated, that it is the interest of "Humanity and Civilization" in Mesopotamia and Egypt and the Sudan—not to mention India—that demands to-day the avoidance of a war between Great Britain and Islam. For this reason peace will be preserved in the East, unless the Turks make such absurdly preposterous demands that a great conflict becomes inevitable.

England, no matter what her outward policy, does not wish to fight Turkey, much less to engage in war against Islam. The disinclination on the part of Great Britain to force Turkey to accept the treaty of Sèvres, has never been so manifest as during the three years of the Greek campaign in Asia Minor. It is to-day an established fact, that had Great Britain really wished to impose on Turkey the Allied victory after the armistice of 1918, she could have done so at any time during 1919, 1920, 1921 and even 1922. We who have followed the Greek campaign in Asia Minor with more than a passing interest, and know the details of the great struggle of the Greek race in this connexion, can say without the slightest fear of being contradicted, that the whole expedition collapsed for no other reason than because France, Italy and Russia gave the Turks their full support, while Great Britain refused to do the same for Greece. When we think of the fact that only a year ago the Hellenic troops were fighting before Angora, we can not reconcile that accomplishment with what happened in Smyrna twelve months later. Greece's political, diplomatic and economic isolation in the face of an enemy who had everything working smoothly for him, is the best explanation of her recent misfortune.

What I want to establish here is that Great Britain did not wish to destroy Turkey; the policy of Downing and Lombard Streets was rather to weaken both Turkey and Greece to such an extent as to make the economic subjugation of both countries a much easier task for those who would profit by it. A weak Turkey under the political and economic tutelage of an England safely entrenched in Constantinople and the Straits, was the most that British policy was striving for. A similarly subjugated maritime nation like Greece, was the logical counterpart of British policy in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The French diplomats followed the opposite policy of strengthening rather than weakening Turkey (against British aggression). These French gentlemen saw that by saving Turkey from the British they would befriend the whole of Islam, and would thus assume that rôle of political leadership

of the Moslem world, which had been in the hands of Britain for the last hundred years. Greece, being a maritime country, and therefore more at the mercy of England, could not be fitted into the French Oriental scheme, and therefore was left out, to shift for herself.

No matter how distasteful and immoral it may be from the orthodox point of view, French policy was both clever and bold. France took the bull by the horns in the Near East, and ignoring all such things as treaties and alliances and moral obligations, became the champion of Kemalist Turkey, defying Great Britain, and pushing audaciously ahead. Here, at least, France was able to punish England for all the disappointments of Versailles and Spa and Boulogne and wherever else British statesmanship had hurt France in its dealings with Germany. The French diplomats found in Angora the Achilles heel of Britannia. The French politicians knew that Great Britain did not dare come out openly against the pro-Moslem policy of France. They knew, moreover, that the more the British showed themselves hostile to France and Islam, the greater would be the success of the French game in the East. French policy was right in this respect, as Great Britain for the first time in her history found herself helpless following a great and victorious war.

"*De l'audace, encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace*": this Dantonian policy became the watchword of France in the Near East. For the last two years the French politicians have been busily and successfully twisting the lion's tail. The present situation is the result. And now, while the Mediterranean and the Atlantic fleets of Great Britain assemble in the Sea of Marmora, and while the King's own regiments are speeding to the Near East, and while the might of Great Britain keeps displaying its futility in Constantinople and the Straits, French policy is again busy trying to convince France's old ally that the best the British Government can do to-day is to come to terms with Islam, in the interests not only of the British Empire, but of "Humanity and Civilization."

France, having organized the Turkish victory, is now busy bargaining with Kemal against the Soviets. Bolshevik Russia is Turkey's ally, but so is France, and between the two, Kemal, if he knows his business, will side with the party that offers the highest price. Here, then, is England's chance, according to French policy. Will Great Britain risk the combined enmity of Islam and Russia, and also the displeasure of France by going against Kemal, when, by giving way to French persuasion, she may regain the friendship and confidence of Islam, prevent the latter's union with Russia, and eventually use the whole Moslem world as a bulwark against Lenin?

This is the present situation in the Near East. Britain, politically beaten by France, is also being blackmailed in the interests of Islam. No wonder Mr. Lloyd George hesitates before such a pass. In the meantime a new war is brewing in the Near East.

I am, etc.,
New York City.

ADAMANTIOS TH. POLYZOIDES.

BOOKS.

A CRITIC OF LIFE AND LETTERS.

THERE are many questions connected with Mr. Lytton Strachey's literary work which are exceedingly puzzling to the reviewer. What explanation, for example, can be given for the undoubted appeal that his writing makes to people who as a rule are not accustomed to concern themselves over much with the affairs of literature?

Can it be that the much talked of ironic note latent in it accounts for its surprising popularity? But if this be really the case, why, we may be permitted to ask, should the ambiguous cadences of an ironic tongue be found to fall gratefully now, for the first time in history, upon philistine ears? From where, then, have these biographical studies gotten their new power of persuasion? It may be possible to explain the strange phenomenon by observing that most of his work up to the present time has been concerned with figures who have so recently passed from the world's stage that the mere mention of their names rouses that particular kind of gossip interest which surrounds historic personalities who are still fresh

in the memory of society; that there is, in fact, a singular satisfaction to be derived from seeing the foibles and vanities of such idols of our fathers, exposed to our view by a witty, collected, and calculating hand.

For myself, I am inclined to attribute it to another cause. Is it not possible that Mr. Strachey is possessed of a style so lucid and unaffected that, by the sheer potency of its innate distinction, it compels recognition? Such a thing, though rare enough in all conscience, has not been unknown to occur in times past; as for instance, in the case of that great master of English prose, Jonathan Swift.

The book before us¹ is made up of a collection of some of his earlier papers and reviews. Though it is true that they lack the superb intensity and brilliant concentration of his later work, there are many beautiful and illuminating passages. The key to Mr. Strachey's critical excellence may be found in his own words: "The modern critic," he says, "has discovered that his first duty is not to criticize but to understand the object of his criticism." Mr. Strachey, of course, is a past master in doing this. He encourages the subjects of his observation to be extravagantly idiosyncratic, and notes down with quick, philosophic eye every chance and revealing characteristic in which they are wont to indulge in their less conscious hours. Though on these occasions he draws his conclusions in a mood profoundly disillusioned, profoundly indulgent, it may be noted as an interesting fact that he is ever ready to throw into a clear light the noble and magnanimous in contrast with what is base and unimaginative.

Just as in his "Eminent Victorians" he teaches us to appreciate the simple goodness of Cardinal Newman in comparison with his pontifical rival, so now, in his essay on Madame du Deffand, he exposes without mercy the selfish, superficial personality of Horace Walpole. The blind woman of fashion had become infatuated with that talented collector of bric-à-brac and had embarked upon a correspondence with him.

The total impression of (Horace Walpole) which these letters produce is very damaging. . . . He was obsessed by a fear of ridicule . . . lest some spiteful story of his absurd relationship with a blind old woman of seventy should be circulated. . . . He insisted with an absolute rigidity on the correspondence being conducted in the tone of the most ordinary friendship . . . and of course such terms were impossible to Madame du Deffand. . . . Then periodically there would be an explosion. . . . After one of his most violent and cruel outbursts, she refused to communicate with him further and for three or four weeks she kept her word; then she crept back and pleaded for forgiveness. Walpole graciously granted it. It is with some satisfaction that one finds him, a few weeks later, laid up with a peculiarly painful attack of the gout.

The essay on Madame du Deffand is one of the most interesting in the volume. With a light, unerring touch Mr. Strachey depicts that exquisite, faded period that produced the genius of Watteau, that delicate, heartless period wherein all man's energy was directed towards maintaining the graceful amenities of a polite society, corrupt and sophisticated.

Indeed those persons who were privileged to enjoy it showed their appreciation of it in an unequivocal way—by the tenacity with which they clung to the scene of such delights and graces. They refused to grow old, they almost refused to die. Time himself seems to have joined the circle, to have been infected with their politeness, and to have absolved them, to the fullest possible point, from the operation of his laws. Voltaire, d'Argental, Moncrief, Henault, Madame Eg-

¹ "Books and Characters." Lytton Strachey. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$3.50.

mont, and Madame du Deffand herself . . . all lived to be well over eighty, with the full zest of their activities unimpaired.

He comments upon the uncompromising scepticism of the age: "It presented a blank wall of perfect indifference alike to the mysteries of the universe and to the solutions of them"; and in half-a-dozen words evokes from the past the living and breathing figure of the worldly old lady:

Madame du Deffand disliked gambling, but she loathed going to bed, and if it came to a choice between the two, she did not hesitate: once at the age of seventy-three she sat up till seven o'clock in the morning playing vingt-et-un with Charles Fox.

And her gay, easy conversation! We are made almost to hear its sharp, brittle tones. "*Ecoutez! Ecoutez!*" Walpole used constantly to exclaim, trying to get in his points: but in vain; the sparkling cataract swept on unheeding."

Even in his Cambridge days, sixteen years ago, Mr. Lytton Strachey shows himself to have been the master of a fine, imaginative style. He is writing of the formal, classical epigrammatic manner of Racine:

Very different is the Shakespearean method. There, as passion rises, expression becomes more and more poetical and vague. Image flows into image, thought into thought, until at last the state of mind is revealed, inform and molten, driving darkly through a vast storm of words.

He is concerned with three other Frenchmen, Henri Beyle, Voltaire, and Rousseau; and how admirably he treats of the last two! With an uncanny sense of actuality he makes us envisage Voltaire during his stay with Frederick the Great.

Shut up all day in the strange little room, still preserved for the eyes of the curious, with its windows opening on the formal garden, and its yellow walls thickly embossed with the brightly coloured shapes of fruits, flowers, and birds, the indefatigable old man worked away at his histories, his tragedies, his Pucelle, and his enormous correspondence.

The merciless ridicule which the quick-witted, insubordinate "monkey" directed against his rival Maupertuis is described as "a sparkling fountain of effervescent raillery—cruel, personal, insatiable—the raillery of a *demon with a grudge*." In his essay that has to do with Voltaire's visit to England, he deplores that so little is known about his meeting with Swift "with whom he lived for three months at Lord Peterborough's." "What would we not give now for no more than one or two of the bright imperishable drops from that noble river of talk which flowed then with such a careless abundance—that prodigal stream swirling away, so swiftly and so happily, into the empty spaces of forgetfulness and the long night of Time!"

In a single sentence he gives us an invaluable clue to the problem of why Jean Jacques Rousseau was so tormented and isolated a figure in the age in which he lived.

Rousseau was not a wicked man . . . he was modern. . . . Among those quick, strong, fiery people of the eighteenth century, he belonged to another world—to the new world of self-consciousness and doubt, and hesitations, of mysterious melancholy and quiet, intimate delights, of long reflections amid the solitudes of Nature, of infinite introspection amid the solitudes of the heart.

Two other pieces of writing are of especial interest: that on Sir Thomas Browne and that on William Blake, both written as early as the year 1906. In the first, Mr. Strachey is at pains to dispose of Mr. Edmund Gosse's animadversions against the ornate, latinized style of the old Norwich physician. "He has no excuse," exclaims Mr. Gosse somewhat petulantly, "for writing

about the 'pensile' gardens of Babylon when all that is required is expressed by 'hanging.'" To which Mr. Strachey replies, and there will be many found to subscribe whole-heartedly to his words, that there is something "shocking about the state of mind which would exchange 'pensile' for 'hanging.'" One could have predicted that Lytton Strachey, literary as he is to his very finger tips, would feel an especial affinity for the "splendid strokes of stylistic *bravura*" displayed in the works of the author of "Urn-Burial." He writes down each bizarre expression with the deep intellectual satisfaction of a true literary epicure, just as he tells us that he used, in his undergraduate days, to "roll the periods of 'Hydriotaphia' out of the darkness and the nightingales through the studious cloisters of Trinity."

Such phrases, for instance, as "sad and sepulchral pitchers which have no joyful voices," "to subsist in bones and be but pyramidally extant," are exceedingly pleasing to him, and in his deft manner he is able to analyse the indefinable elements that constitute their attraction. "Such a word as 'pyramidally,' gives one at once an immediate sense of something mysterious, something extraordinary, and, at the same time something grotesque."

In his essay on Blake he regrets the temerity of such editors as have seen fit to tamper with the poet's original text. It appears that the first line of one of his most celebrated songs has suffered in this way. "Tyger! Tyger! burning bright" is how it was written on the engraving; the orthographical alteration having been quite arbitrarily made. It is clear that the "Tyger" of Blake's imagination was meant to denote no commonplace animal from the Bengal jungles, but rather one that contained in its "awful symmetry" the very embodiment of those splendid creatures that sprang hot from God's hand what time "the sons of the morning shouted for joy."

In order to illustrate what Blake's own feelings would have been, had he been cognizant of such mutilations, Mr. Strachey quotes appropriately enough:

Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

He points out how particularly unpardonable such casual editing is in the case of William Blake "whose mastery of the mysterious suggestions which lie concealed in words is complete."

He who torments the Chafer's Sprite
Weaves a Bower in endless Night

"What dark and terrible visions the last line calls up!" so Mr. Lytton Strachey apostrophizes, revealing by so doing, the strangely deep and sensitive nature of his own personal imagination.

What is it, one asks oneself again, that gives to this critic of life and letters his delicacy of apprehension, his satanic insight, his sureness of touch? Is it perhaps that he represents so completely a certain intellectual detachment that is the special heritage of these superconscious latter days, that he is, in fact, profoundly and fundamentally disillusioned? In one of his sentences he would seem almost to suggest as much; for in referring to the uncompromising scepticism of Madame du Deffand he adds significantly, "Certainly there is something at once pitiable and magnificent in such an unflinching perception of the futilities of living. . . . But there is something alarming, too: was she perhaps right after all?"

LLEWELYN POWYS.

"WHAT MY FRIENDS AND I THINK."

SINCE religion is concerned with the relationship of God and man, there are two fundamental dogmas in every theology; its conception of God and its idea of humanity. The more nearly primary of these is the latter. All religions break into two grand divisions, according to whether in them man is regarded as a being in whom individuality is essential, or as one in whom individuality is accidental. In each division all sorts of minor diversities are found, due to varying concepts of God. Roughly speaking, all Occidental religions, classical, Christian, and neo-Christian, have agreed in thinking men essentially individuals; while the Orient has persistently denied this, and has taught and believed that success in life lies in the abandonment of individuality. We are used to-day to all sorts of variation in belief about God; but disbelievers in that Occidental humanology of ours, which is fundamental in our concepts of society, literature, art, drama—in short, our thought—are still to us a novelty. Dr. Kirsopp Lake¹ thinks the Occident is wrong and the Orient is right; he maintains in the Ingersoll Lecture (Harvard) for 1922 that personal immortality is a myth and that individuality is a curse.

For this, as a matter of private opinion, no one can criticize him. If Dr. Lake, contemplating the life and ideals of the East, prefers them to those Western characteristics of initiative and personal responsibility which are due to our conviction that we are essentially individuals, that is his affair. He is merely another example of a certain detached group which to-day, because of certain truly deplorable features of Western life, despises all Western culture since Athens, and longs for the excessive mysticism of Asia. When, however, he asserts that "the modern mind" shares his indifference to, and even distaste for, immortality of a personal sort, one has a right to be a little impatient. What is "the modern mind"? The phrase is too much used in contemporary writing as a respectable synonym for "what my friends and I think." There seems, to a dispassionate observer, quite a remarkable revival to-day of interest in personal immortality, even though the interest may not be considerable in Dr. Lake's set. Knowledge to-day is, like life itself, so inchoate that to generalize about "the modern mind," is a thing less scientific than one expects from a Winn Professor.

It is remarkable also that the author should not know whence has arisen the lack of interest in life beyond death, that characterizes that little group which he seems to identify with every one who to-day is thinking. He takes pains to say that it is not because they fail to find life here good that they care nothing about its existence; he does not state the obviously possible corollary, that it is because they find it too good. They substitute, Dr. Lake says, for a hope of immortality, a belief in making the world better by knowledge and invention. That may do for those who think our civilization both beautiful and permanent. Those who are in despair at the present world-situation, those who see how the biological factor in history ever tends to destroy civilization, need and demand something more than is required by the sheltered scholar. These persons are, Dr. Lake might reply, not of "the modern mind"; indeed to them "the modern mind" may seem a bit old-fashioned.

Dr. Lake might well have spared his sneers at Bishops Westcott and Gore. Surely a Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History must know that their teaching about "the resurrection of the flesh" is not their own disingenuous invention.

B. I. B.

OUR LAST OLYMPIANS?

THESE "Memories and Notes"² of Sir Sidney Colvin, reminiscential chiefly of the great figures of the middle and later parts of Victoria's reign, impress nothing upon the reader, I think, so much as the queer remoteness, I had almost said the antiquity, of the age of which they are

so trustworthy a record. I wonder whether any two generations were ever at once so contiguous and so distant as the generation of Pre-Raphaelitism, of the "Poems and Ballads: First Series," of the Congress of Berlin, and ours. It is no easy task to put one's finger on the exact quality of that difference, and certainly no easy one to account for it satisfactorily; but no one can fail to apprehend it as, for instance, he reads a book of memoirs like this one. What an air of the far away and long ago have these genteel, robust, leisurely, high-minded, civilized people! the elderly Browning, with his loud voice and "vigorous geniality of bearing," constantly in evidence at social gatherings of every sort; George Eliot enthroned on her Sunday afternoons at the Priory, and the dutiful Lewes in his hieratic rôle of directing worship; Rossetti in his shattered later days, reading his own poems to his admirers in the "kind of sustained musical drone or hum with which he used to dwell on and stress and prolong the rime-words and sound-echoes"; Burne-Jones valorously concealing his temperamental melancholy under a mask of high spirits, "shouting with laughter as he echoed the choicer utterances of Sam Weller or Micawber or Mrs. Gamp, his head flung back and beard in the air"; Louis Stevenson swaggering about England and Europe with his lean figure, his disreputable air, his almost Bohemian costume, a vital and full-blooded presence, according to Sir Sidney, in spite of the tradition of anaemia; Mrs. Fleeming Jenkin, daughter of Alfred Austin and cousin of Lady Duff-Gordon, playing Clytemnestra and other tragic rôles with great distinction in private theatricals!

I do not know what emotions may be aroused in other readers by the contemplation of such people and such a social order—those emotions would doubtless include a mild hilarity as well as a mild regret—but the emotion aroused in me is one of bewilderment, or at least of confused wonder. Did such Olympians live in a day so close to our own? Was life but so recently as ordered, as secure, as humane, as that life must have been if Sir Sidney portrays it with any fidelity? For Olympians, after all, these people in all seriousness were—discounting all one will for whatever preposterousness they may have had—and ordered, secure, humane, their life must, upon the whole, have been. We younger ones have of course always heard a great deal about the spiritual doubts and fears that plagued our Victorian forebears: but we can not believe that they ever knew what it was to feel the world going to pieces about them. Men like Clough and Arnold may have gone about in a kind of quiet terror at having seen God slip out of their universe: but did they ever have reason to doubt a certain stability and predictability in the international order? Well, the truth may possibly be that some spaciousness, some serenity, is a condition of the appearance of Olympians, and that the swarming of infusoriae in our generation has some effectual relation to the ricketiness of our world. Has that other world gone by for good, then, and have we entertained, for the time being at least, our last Olympian?

Gone by or not, that world has not disappeared without some illuminating accounts of it having been left to us, and of these Sir Sidney's is by no means the least notable. Few men, indeed, can have been better qualified, either by temperament or by opportunity, to give us this sort of record. Born in the mid-forties, when the chief figures of the era were in their early prime, and born into a distinguished Suffolk family that destined him for a career among important people, Sidney Colvin was from boyhood more or less conversant with the cultural activities of the age. Edward Fitzgerald, at that time no celebrity, was a neighbour of the Colvins; and Sir Sidney can remember him, "an odd, tall, sad-faced, middle-aged or elderly gentleman wandering, say rather drifting, abstractedly about the country roads in an ill-fitting suit with a shabby hat pushed back on his head, blue spectacles on nose, and an old cape cast anyhow about his shoulders." The family of John Ruskin were intimate friends, and Sir Sidney came early under the

¹ "Immortality and the Modern Mind." Kirsopp Lake. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. \$1.00.

² "Memories and Notes of Persons and Places, 1852-1912." Sir Sidney Colvin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.50.

spell of that powerful and tyrannous personality—a spell which his own independence later broke, but which must have been instrumental in setting the direction of his thought. As an art-critic in London upon leaving Cambridge, then as Slade Professor at his own university, and finally, during a generation, keeper of the prints at the British Museum, Sir Sidney had what must be called exceptional opportunities for noting the Olympian gesture and attuning his ear to the true Olympian accent.

A certain lenity of disposition, from which the saline is not wholly omitted, gives Sir Sidney very nearly the precise qualifications for conveying that gesture and accent to us. Instinctive kindness keeps him from etching his portraits with too corrosive an acid, but an urbane perspicacity, also, keeps him from allowing them to become grandiose. There is a sentence from the short note on George Eliot which has already become famous: "If George Eliot's countenance was of the equine type, his (Lewes's) was not less distinctly of the simian." There is, if no malice, surely a little irony in his description of the aged Victor Hugo, pontifically seated among his disciples in the Rue de Clichy, while "*Chut, le maître va parler!*" is whispered peremptorily when the conversation threatens to become general. His account of Meredith shows what an intelligent appreciation he had from the first of that master's work—as in esteeming his poetry even more highly than his prose—but it shows too, that he perceived a kind of intellectual foppiness in the elaborate badinage of which Meredith's conversation so often consisted. Such reservations as these bespeak, indeed, the professional critic, but it would be improper to convey the impression that they are frequent or ever more than casual. Sir Sidney's tone is most steadily one of esteem, veneration, or affection: he is no mere hero-worshipper, yet it is clear that he can not but regard men like Burne-Jones, Browning, Watts, Stevenson, Rossetti, Fleeming Jenkin, Sir Charles Newton, as in their various ways heroes. To depict them as such, and still to preserve the human rotundity of his pictures, was an exigent task, but Sir Sidney has succeeded at it.

I do not know, however, that I am so much interested in the portraits he has drawn thus gracefully, as in certain reflections which the book suggests to me about Sir Sidney Colvin himself. Do we recognize as frequently as we should the significance of such men as he?—men certainly not of original minds, or of the intense personalities which, as he says, constitute genius, but men of high and fine talents, nevertheless; humane, cultivated, liberal, contributive; men of the type of Leslie Stephen or, on a very different plane, of the late Sir Walter Raleigh. Sir Sidney, in his life of Keats, performed a very definite service for English letters, and if I knew more about it I should probably be able to say as much for his lifelong devotion to art and archæology in his duties at Cambridge and London. England and the Continental countries seem to produce a certain number of such men in every generation; and we in America, so far as I know, have hitherto produced none, or almost none. Certain figures of the first rank we have had, and great numbers of the small fry: but none of that estimable second rank of which I am speaking. Mr. P. E. More once said finely that, "The aim of culture is not to merge the present in a sterile dream of the past but to hold the past as a living force in the present." To do that is precisely—is it not?—the function of such men as Sir Sidney, and the presence of such men is the mark—is it not?—of a mature and vigorous culture.

NEWTON ARVIN.

SHORTER NOTICES.

EDGAR SALTUS is quoted as saying, a few weeks before his death, that "if 'The Ghost Girl' doesn't sell, I'm through with writing," and one is never without the sense, in turning the pages of this story,¹ that the author was working with that thought uppermost in his mind. One discerns few traces of the earlier Saltus in the narrative; those that still remain are but the ravellings of a once brilliant and exotic style. Instead,

there is a breeziness which is feverish rather than spontaneous, and a will-to-shock that defeats itself. "The Ghost Girl" is a mystery tale, ingenious and occasionally exciting, but the texture of it is thin, as if to advertise the author's own lack of belief in it; and nothing travels on more leaden soles than a ghost story in which the creator keeps passing his hand through the apparition with a cynical smile, as if to say: "See, it's a sure-enough spook!" L. B.

MR. DENNIS's first novel¹ is in the form of an autobiography of its heroine, and the book is an excellent illustration of the deleterious effect of the scientific spirit upon imaginative literature. The scientist must have abundant evidence for his conclusions, so every little detail must be considered; but the artist needs only the significant, and only such portions of the significant as will suggest reality to the imagination. It is to the image-making powers of the mind that he should appeal, not to the rational. Here the rational is so closely regarded that the image is contracted even if it is made definite. The result is an architect's draft and not a painter's presentation. The minutiae of the child's life are too fully treated. They do serve to set forth her early environment and her education, but much of it is unnecessary and causes the period of her dawning womanhood, a period of greater importance in most lives, to be skipped over hastily. The first three-quarters of the book is really an account of the girl's preparation for life; but since there is nothing to her life one feels that so complete an account of this preparation was unnecessary. There are several graphic scenes and vivid character-sketches, but the canvas is crowded with too many figures drawn with the same care and the same abundance of detail. The author can narrate an incident with much power, he can give to ordinary events the thrill of the adventurous, he can depict character with effectiveness; but he has yet to learn the artistic necessity of rejection. J. L. T.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

IN what I have said about books and the use of books, I have found myself often dwelling upon the best fruit of letters as a *temper*, a frame of mind, a general attitude of spirit. This temper is what the Greeks understood and expressed by the word *epitēkeia*, which Matthew Arnold admirably translates as *sweet reasonableness*, informed wisdom working in a medium of sweetness, of prepossessing amiability. The discipline of letters may be formative, or it may be only instrumental. It is formative when so directed as to tend towards this temper; when, that is, we read with a primary view to a *becoming*, rather than to a knowing, doing or getting. Because the formative power of letters is rather generally disregarded and because their use is now so largely instrumental, in so far as they are used at all, it is more than ever proper to recommend their use as a formative discipline, or at least to give the intending student of letters an intelligent choice in the matter, which at present he has not. Let us tell him plainly that if he desires instrumental knowledge, the great bulk of letters, especially the classics, has so little for him that he had best let it alone. To read Plato, Sophocles, Virgil, Goethe, Rabelais, Cervantes, or to read Smollett, Racine, Calderon, with a view to instrumental knowledge, to a mere knowing, doing or getting, is a waste of time; and if instrumental knowledge is the only kind worth having, the dust upon these authors should be even deeper than it is. But if one wishes formative knowledge, knowledge gained with a view to a *becoming*, to progress towards the ideal of lucidity and sweetness, they are indispensable. We should, I say, put this choice clearly before the intending student of letters, and then bid him pray with the unknown author of the "Imitation," *Da mihi, Domine, scire quod sciendum*—"Grant, O Lord, that the knowledge I get may be the kind that is really worth having."

THE ideal of lucidity and sweetness is so disparaged at present that one may regard it as having gone out of fashion altogether. In the English-speaking world, indeed, it has never been perhaps very popular; our turn has been rather for energy and activity than for lucidity and sweetness; other nations and races have done far more with lucidity and sweetness than we. But now there

¹ "The Ghost Girl." Edgar Saltus. New York: Boni and Liveright. \$2.00.

¹ "Mary Lee." Geoffrey Dennis. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

seems to be arising among us an uneasy suspicion that perhaps we have a little overdone our turn for energy and activity, that they are not bringing us out quite where we thought they might; and with this, too, there seems to be somewhat more toleration for lucidity and sweetness, more curiosity about them and willingness to think that there may possibly be something in them after all. The poor disparaged followers of lucidity and sweetness have in general, therefore, a better opportunity to give their wares some sort of recommendation; and the best possible recommendation is by way of sample. When the prospective reader or student asks us what is the spirit and temper that we recommend as the best fruit of letters, the convincing answer is to point to some good example, and without any further disquisition say, We mean just the kind of thing that you find *there*. One can always point to classical examples taken from the past; but there is a sense of remoteness, of "other times, other manners," which makes them less effective than an example taken from the present. When one can point to a temper bred by letters in our own time, place and circumstances, wholly at one with ourselves in all externals and exposed to all our temptations and distractions—when one can point to such an example and say that the best fruit of letters is what one sees *there*, the force of the example is greatly heightened.

How fortunate it is then, that we have a capital example—none could well be better—in the literary autobiography of Mr. Maurice Francis Egan, just published by Doubleday, Page and Company, under the title, "Confessions of a Booklover." Mr. Egan's is one of the best literary minds in the country—I think, all in all, the best, though this is but a personal opinion, and perhaps of no great consequence—and his literary judgments are therefore important enough in themselves to give this small and unpretentious book a considerable value. But the chief value of the book, indeed for contemporary readers its singular and inestimable value, is in its exhibition of the spirit and temper that I have been discussing. Mr. Egan is a good critic; it is important, doubtless, to know what he thinks of this or that author, this or that literary movement or tendency. Much more important it is, however, to discern his invariable frame of mind, to mark the effect upon the human spirit of a long commerce with letters, intelligently and conscientiously accepted as a purely formative discipline. If I had my way I should use this book as a touchstone upon all persons who felt the stirrings of an instinct towards literature. I should put it in their hands and say, If you wish to see the best that literature can do in its formative effect upon life and character, if you wish to get a practical measure of lucidity and sweetness in order to decide upon their desirability for yourselves, and to decide upon the efficacy of literature as a means of getting them, here is your chance.

AN excellent test, the best possible test, of the true value of this book, is in one's disagreements with it. I disagree with Mr. Egan in several of his literary judgments. I can not share his estimate of Mr. Tarkington's "Penrod," and the episode which he quotes serves but to confirm me in my dissent. I can not go one step with him in his praise of Mr. Roosevelt as a booklover; it seems to me that in spite of his diligence as a reader, books never "took" with Mr. Roosevelt, that lucidity and sweetness were never his, and that he was but a charlatan in literature. I can not quite agree with Mr. Egan in assigning to Francis Thompson a pre-eminence among the English mystical poets. I greatly doubt the soundness of his view of the place of joyousness and gaiety in the life of the Greeks; I greatly doubt his statement that there is nobody writing in the daily press in Paris to-day who does the feuilleton as well as Messrs. Morley, Broun, Marquis and Mencken; I think I could point out one or two who are doing it rather better. There are several other observations here and there in the book, concerning which I should at least hesitate before accepting them. But the point is—and this is what I should make clear to the intending student of literature—the point is that Mr.

Egan's opinions are so suffused by the true literary spirit and temper that one perceives immediately that after all, agreement or disagreement is not the important thing. One remembers Jeremy Taylor's great saying, which is as true in the concerns of literature as in those of religion, or of any other spiritual activity, that "it is keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and not identity of opinion, which the Holy Spirit demands of us." If anyone were aware of this, one would say that it should be the man of letters.

To remark how keenly Mr. Egan is aware of it, how instinctively he brings his own practice into conformity with it, is in itself an edifying study in the literary temper. See how admirably he manages, without the least loss of force or compromise of soundness, upon a highly controversial topic:

The new school of pedagogical thought disapproves, I know, of miscellaneous reading, and no modern moralist will agree with Madame de Sévigné that 'bad books are better than no books at all'; but Madame de Sévigné may have meant books written in a bad style, or feeble books, and not books bad in the moral sense. However, I must confess that when I was young, I read several books which I was told afterward were very bad indeed. But I did not find this out until somebody told me. The youthful mind must possess something of the quality attributed to a duck's back. I recall that once 'The Confessions of Rousseau' was snatched suddenly away from me by a careful mother just as I had begun to think that Jean Jacques was a very interesting man and almost as queer as some of the people I knew. I believe that if I had been allowed to finish the book, it would have become by some mental chemical process a very edifying criticism of life.

And, again, this:

The first appearance of Kipling's poems recalled the old thrills of 'new' poets, but of late, though the prospects of poetry are beginning to revive, no very modern poet seems to have become a part of the daily lives of the young, who declare that the world is changed, and that the Old hold no torches for them by which they can discover what they really want. The more things change, the more they remain the same. And the young woman who read Swinburne surreptitiously and smoked a cigarette in private now reads Havelock Ellis on summer porches, and puffs at a cigarette in public whenever she feels like it. She is really no more advanced than the girl of the period of the 'eighties, and not any more astonishing. It's the same old girl. And the young men who discovered Swinburne and Rossetti, and who were rather bored by the thinness of their aftermath, the æsthetic poets, really got more colour and amazement and delight out of the flashing of the meteors than the youth of to-day seem to get. It was the fashion then to be blasé and cynical and bored with life; but nobody was really bored because there were too many amusing and delightful things in the world—as there are now.

If one were citing Mr. Egan as a critic, one would, I think, call particular attention to his observations on the reading of the Bible, on Theocritus and his imitators, on Maurice de Guérin, José-Maria de Herédia, Dickens. Mr. Egan's book, indeed, would serve as an introduction to general literature ten thousand times better than the formal introductions that are used in the schools. The object of an introduction, after all, is to promote an acquaintance. The textbook-introductions do not do this, and Mr. Egan's book does. Nevertheless, the one function that this book pre-eminently fulfills, and the only one of which I wish to speak just now, is that of showing the sort of inward and spiritual grace that may reasonably be expected to ensue upon an occupation with literature. It is "the most prepossessing and convincing of witnesses to the good of loving light." The reader may lay it aside with the assurance that if he wishes to become like *that*, to be able to maintain that attitude of spirit habitually towards the things that he does like and those that he does not like, his way lies unmistakably through literature. Literature will not directly enable him to get much or to do much. It will not make him rich or put him in the way of preferment. But it will enable him to experience life in a new spirit; and Mr. Egan's book is of conspicuous value because it so clearly exhibits that spirit and reveals the satisfactions that accrue to its possessor.

Who is going to get this paper after you have finished reading it?

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